

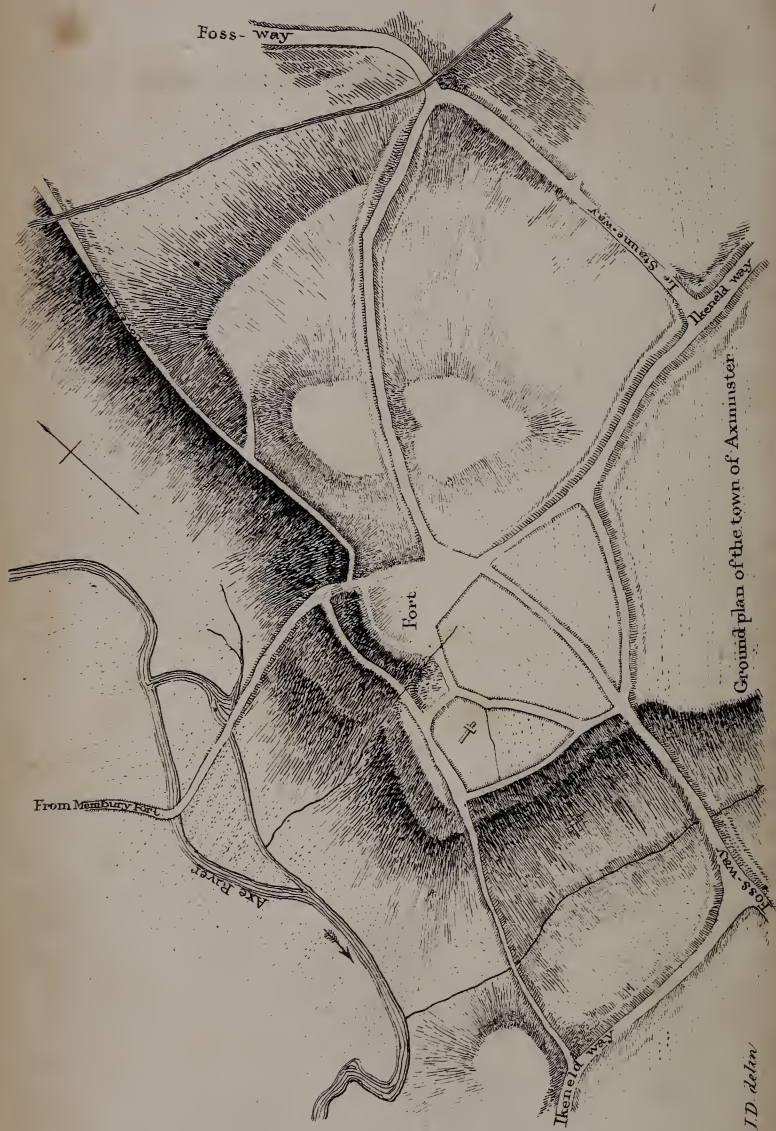
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Ground plan of the town of Axminster

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THE
British and Roman Remains
IN
THE VICINITY
OF
AXMINSTER,
IN THE COUNTY OF DEVON.

BY JAMES DAVIDSON.

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P R E F A C E.

THE town of Axminster is seated in the eastern part of the county of Devon, on the borders of Dorset and Somerset; and the following pages are an attempt to rescue from undeserved oblivion some few vestiges of ancient times in its neighbourhood, which are gradually disappearing from observation, or are sinking beyond the reach of memory. The discoveries of earlier writers have been brought forward, but their conjectures have not always been implicitly adopted: nothing, indeed, has been taken for granted which could be submitted to the test of actual investigation. Some portions of the adjacent counties have been necessarily brought under observation; but if it be objected that the inquiry has been extended beyond reasonable limits, the only apology which can be offered is the fact that, in a district abounding as this does with traces of British and

Roman occupation, the difficulty consists rather in deciding what to reject than what to bring into notice; and that in this part of the kingdom a field, hitherto almost unexplored, lies open to the antiquary, sufficiently extensive and fertile to reward the most diligent investigator, and to furnish materials for an interesting and elaborate essay.

Secktor, March 6, 1833.

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“What signifies that knowledge, say some, which brings no real advantage to mankind; and what is it to any one, whether the Roman walls passed this way or that, or whether such a Roman inscription is to be read this way or another? To this I would answer: there is that beauty and agreeableness in truth, even supposing it to be merely speculative, as always affords, on the discovery of it, real pleasure to a well-turned mind: and I will add, that it not only pleases, but enriches and cultivates it too.”—Horsley’s Britannia Romana, Pref. p. ii.

British and Roman Remains

IN THE

VICINITY OF AXMINSTER.

PART I.—British Remains.

Britain known to the Ancients—Articles of Commerce—Face of the Country—People—Druids—Southern Tribes—Boundary of the Morini and Danmonii—Border Fortresses—Musbury Castle—Membury Castle—British Sepulture—Towns—Roads—Ikeneld Street—British Ornament—Cromlech—Fosse-way—Castle of Axminster—Form of the Town—Ancient Name—Conclusion.

British Remains

IN THE

VICINITY OF AXMINSTER.

THE Ancients were well acquainted with the existence of Britain, at a period long before the commencement of our authentic history. The Phœnicians, who were among the first navigators of the ocean, and who are supposed to have been the earliest traders to this island, are said by Strabo to have estimated the advantages of their traffic with it so highly, that they used the most careful means to conceal the destination of their voyages, and to confine the products of the country to their own exclusive purposes*. But neither the existence nor the situation of so considerable a source of wealth could long remain a secret. The Greeks also found their way to the coasts of Britain†; and the Romans, when in the plenitude of their power they had subdued the greatest part

* For some vestiges of a Phœnician settlement in Dorsetshire, see Miles on the Kimmeridge Coal-money, p. 46.

† Greek coins, to the number of more than a hundred, have been found at various times in Dorsetshire, and some in Hampshire.

of the known world, and had pushed their conquests to the utmost boundaries of Gaul, determined to obtain an acquaintance with a country which had furnished assistance to their enemies, and which wore an inviting aspect. Julius Cæsar invaded the island in the year 53 before the Christian æra; and it is to that celebrated commander and historian that we are chiefly indebted for what knowledge we possess of the state of the country, and of the manners and customs of the Britons, at that period.

While the gold, silver, and more useful metals of Devon and Cornwall, the pearls of the coasts *, and the skins of animals, in exchange for pottery, salt, and brass, afforded the means of trade with the foreigners who visited Britain; the face of the country was generally waste and uncultivated, shaded by vast forests, and deformed by extensive morasses, which afforded to the numerous hordes of its rude inhabitants a shelter from the weather, and an asylum from their enemies †. The people are described as “a fierce and savage race, running wild in woods,” clothed in skins, and sub-

* Suetonius's *Life of Julius Cæsar*, s. 47. Tacitus's *Life of Agricola*, s. 12. Is it not possible that the pearl fisheries at the mouths of our south-western rivers may have been destroyed by the stream-works in mining operations?

† For an interesting account of the forests and fens of ancient Britain, see the *Philosoph. Trans.* No. 275.

sisting principally on the milk of their herds, the produce of the chase, and the spontaneous fruits of the earth. They lived in huts collected together in the woods, surrounded by a ditch, and fortified by a rampart of earth ; uniting for the defence of themselves and their cattle, as well from beasts of prey as from the still more ferocious attacks of their own species. Their religion, if their solemn practices can be so called, was truly natural ; consisting rather in the depraved gratification of their appetites and passions, than in any elevation of mind and character. But though such was generally the appearance of the country on the arrival of the Romans, and these the characteristics of the people at large, a considerable degree of civilization prevailed among the Druids, who were the priests of their ancient idolatry, and among the chieftains of the tribes, who held a secondary rank in the state : the former were versed in astronomy, and possessed a written language ; while the latter were skilled in many of the mechanical arts, understood the science of military fortification, and fought in chariots* ; attainments in knowledge which they had acquired from their eastern pro-

* Cæsar, *Wars in Gaul*, b. iv. s. 29 ; v. s. 7, 10, 17 ; vi. s. 13. Tacitus's *Life of Agricola*, s. 12, 21. Plutarch's *Life of Julius Cæsar*. Sir R. C. Hoare's *Ancient Wilts*, ii. pp. 10, 11.

genitors *. On the south-western coasts, also, the harshest features of barbarism among the people had been softened by their communication with the Phœnicians and the Greeks; while all the tribes of the southern maritime counties maintained a constant intercourse with Belgic Gaul. It is here, therefore, if any where, that we may expect to find traces of an abundant population, that we may look for the sites of British towns, may discover the remains of those trackways, or lines of communication, between their trading places, without which commerce could not be proceeded with; and, especially, may recognize the more permanent fortresses, which afforded them a secure retreat from the attacks of their enemies, either foreign or domestic.

Tacitus says: "The Britons are divided into factions, under various chieftains; and this disunion, which prevents their acting in concert for a public interest, is a circumstance highly favourable to the Roman arms against a warlike people, independent, fierce, and obstinate: a confederation

* The researches of the learned are daily adding to an accumulation of evidence which tends to prove that the aborigines of Britain sprung from the nations of the East; that Druidism, like the Brahminical superstition, was but a modification of Arkite worship; and that we must look to a period long anterior to the dispersion of the Celtic tribes for the primæval history of the British race.

of two or more states to repel the common danger is seldom known; they fight in parties, and the nation is subdued *." Thus, at the time of Cæsar's landing, the south-western parts of the country appear to have been divided among three powerful tribes, viz.—

The Belgæ, who, actuated by love of war and plunder, had issued from Germany, and, driving the ancient Britons before them, had taken possession of parts of Wiltshire, Somerset, and Hampshire.

The Morini, who, having conquered the Durotriges, a Celtic tribe, had seated themselves in Dorsetshire: and

The Danmonii, who had retained possession of Devonshire, and had subdued a part of Cornwall, the territory of the Carnabii.

These tribes, as well as the pre-occupants of their dominions, led, in all probability, a life of frequent and savage hostility. Each possessed its metropolitan fortress; and these sylvan fastnesses were of the most important advantage to them in the conduct of their warfare with the Romans; from them, like the Morini of Gaul, they advanced unawares to the attack, and to them they retreated

* Life of Agricola, Murphy's translation, s. 12.

to avoid pursuit *. But in addition to their strong holds in the woods, they adopted the precaution of fortifying such elevated positions as the face of the country presented, for places of refuge under pressure of the enemy. The west of England is thickly scattered with hill-fortresses of this description, and in no part of it, perhaps, are these ancient earthworks more numerous than in the district surrounding the town of Axminster. Within the distance of about twenty-five miles from the place, no less a number than thirty may be pointed out, and traces of many more might probably be discovered. The opinions of writers have greatly differed on the probable date to be assigned to these intrenchments : while some have considered them to be principally the works of the Romans, others have attributed them to the Saxons, and several have given them entirely to the Danes. A satisfactory decision of the question is not, indeed, in most instances, unattended with difficulty, as there are scarcely two of these numerous forts which do not differ in one or more material points of their construction : but the

* Cæs. iii. s. 30 ; v. 8, 17. Winchester, under the name of *Caer Gwent*, was the principal town of the Belgæ ; *Dunium*, or *Dorchester*, that of the *Durotriges* ; and *Penhulgoile* (the chief town in the wood), called also *Caerath* (the city of the red soil), *Exeter*, that of the *Danmonii*.

inquiry, notwithstanding its interesting nature, must be confined within the limits of our present investigation, observing only that the larger number may, with the greatest probability, be considered as the works of the Britons.

The two forts of Musbury and Membury, which are in the immediate neighbourhood of the town of Axminster, will call for our attention. These intrenchments form part of what has been termed a chain of forts, extending from the sea to a considerable distance within land, nearly upon the borders of Devonshire and Dorset; and an opinion has been advanced that they were erected by the Danmonii, as a frontier defence against the Morini. The boundary line which divided these two powerful tribes, does not appear to have been fixed upon with any degree of certainty. It has been supposed that the river Otter, which runs through the vale of Honiton, separated the possessions of these neighbouring states; and again, that their limits were marked by the line which at the present day divides the counties; but, judging from a careful examination of the forms and positions of the fortresses which command the valleys towards the west, and especially from the evident traces upon the hills of ancient track-ways connecting them on their eastern sides, there is great reason to conclude, that they were rather

constructed by the Morini as barriers against the Danmonii, and that the line of division between these tribes was formed by the river Axe in the lower part of its course, and by the Yarty to the north of it, taking the eastern branch of the last mentioned river. Under this supposition, the forts which constituted the frontier defence of the Morini from the sea coast northwards, were Hochsdon, Musbury, Membury, Lambart's-castle, Pillesdon-pen, and Ham-hill; and those of the Danmonii, Woodbury, Sidbury, Belbury, Blackbury, Hembury, Dumpdon, and Neroche. Several forts of smaller consequence, and on less elevated positions, may be looked upon as outposts*. The various forms of the opposing hills on either side of the rivers Axe and Yarty, presented situations most favourable for such intrenchments; and these have been fixed upon by the military engineers of different periods, for their frontier or temporary defence, according as their mode of castrametation, the shape of the hill, the position of the enemy, or other circumstances induced them.

The first of the chain of forts on the eastern side of the Axe is that called Hawksdown, or

* Honey-ditches, near Seaton, and the two camps on Longbear Down, near Stockland, come within the line of the Danmonian forts; but there are very good reasons for considering the former to have been of Danish, and the latter of Anglo-Saxon, formation.

Hochsdun*, on a very bold eminence, rising above the village of Axmouth, with which village, and with the estuary of the river, it was evidently connected by a covert way leading directly down the declivity of the hill. An ancient road also connects this fortress with the next of the series; namely, that of Musbury, which is at about two miles distance in a direct line. The third, which is at Membury, is about five miles distant from the latter; but all of them are within sight of each other; and, almost equidistant between the two last, is seated the town with the ancient fortress of Axminster. The intrenchment, or, as it is usually called, the castle of Musbury† crowns the southern point of a projecting branch of the hill which divides the valley of Combe-Pyne from that of the Axe. On the south-eastern side, the rising grounds towards Uplyme intervene at the distance of a mile, and

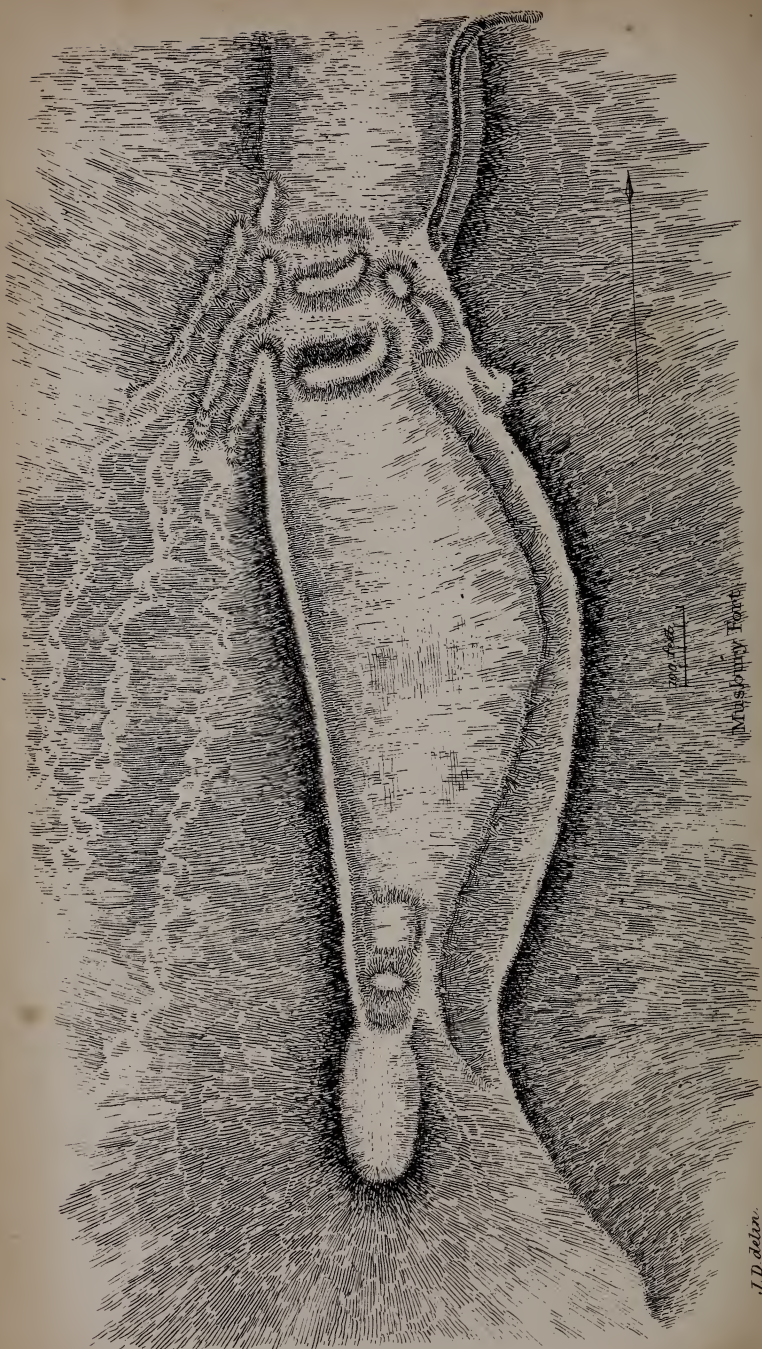
* Hochsdun, the high hill, from the German "hoch," high, and the Anglo-Saxon "dun," a hill. So Hockford, Hockworthy, Hocklands, Hoxton, and others. The name of the elevated parish of Hawkchurch in Dorsetshire, has the same derivation; but it is also called "Heychurch," from the Anglo-Saxon "heah," high, by the common people, whose pronunciation is the best foundation for etymological inquiries in connexion with topography.

† From the Anglo-Saxon "maest," greatest, largest; and "beorg," a heap or mound. The instances of the application of the term "burgh," or "bury," to fortified places, are too numerous to be cited.

intercept the view in that direction, which seems to indicate that the fort was not constructed for a defence against enemies from that quarter. In every other direction, this elevated spot commands an extensive and beautiful prospect; looking down upon the fertile vale, through which the Axe takes its winding course; it includes within its range, the towns and villages of Seaton, Colyford, Colyton, Widford, Musbury, Kilminster, and Axminster. On the south, the view is bounded by the ocean between Hochsdun, and the lofty cliffs at Beer cove. A little farther west, the eye reaches the hills of Southleigh, Farway, and Gittesham, including the intrenchment above Wiscombe park, called Blackbury with its beacon*. Beyond Shute hill and the beacon there, is seen Dumpdon near Honiton with its conspicuous earth-work, and at a yet further distance, the great intrenchment of Hembury; while towards the northwest, the elevated ranges of Longbear down, and the Yarcombe hills arrest the sight. Northwards the intrenchments of Neroche in Somersetshire may be discerned; and eastward those of Eggardun in Dorsetshire are distinctly visible. The view from this

* This is a small but interesting intrenchment of an oval form, with a projection from the works on the south side, evidently intended for a beacon, as the flint stones which formed its walls are vitrified. A large quantity of spear heads of mixed metal, and probably Roman, were found in this camp.





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Musbury Fort

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position embraced no less than twelve hill-fortresses of similar character, from either of which a beacon signal might be communicated to the others, and so to a vast extent of country*. The intrenchment of Musbury, as will appear by the accompanying ground-plan, is of a very irregular form, which accomodates itself on three of its sides to the shape of the hill summit; and a cursory glance will suffice to shew how much at variance its outline is with those of all the unquestioned Roman camps which have hitherto been described. It has been said that this intrenchment had formerly a double vallum, and that one of the banks has been destroyed by the action of the plough, to which its area has been subject for a long series of years; but no vestiges of the inner vallum remain, if such an one ever existed. The statement seems to have arisen from a too hasty inspection of an outwork on the eastern side, and of the mounds at the extremities, which were evidently thrown up to protect the gateways. These entrances are, contrary to all former statements, three in number—two at the ends, on the eastern side; and the third

* “ As two broad becons set in open fields
 “ Send forth their flames far off to euery shyre,
 “ And warning giue that enemies conspire
 “ With fire and sword the region to invade,
 “ So flam’d his eyne.”

Faerie Queene, b. i. c. 11.

at the north-western corner—but this last appears to have been made at a period subsequent to the original construction. From the eastern gateway, towards the north, a covert or hollow way may be traced, leading down to the valley, where, in all probability, a British village was situated. Intercourse with the fortress might thus be held, without observation from the neighbouring heights; and a communication might be maintained between the gateways at either end by a similar passage, which exists below the vallum on the eastern side. The area within the rampart, which comprises about six acres, is of considerable height in the middle, sloping gradually to the sides, and presenting much irregularity of surface.—From the northern entrance of this fort a road connects it with Lambart's castle, an intrenchment in Dorsetshire, seven miles distant. This trackway may be followed without difficulty by a careful observer, even through a plantation, and where it crosses an arable field*.

* A hint may not be unacceptable to the antiquary of the hill, the field, and the forest. If he wish for success in tracing the vestiges of ancient earthworks and lines of communication, which are in many instances almost effaced by the united effects of the weather and cultivation, he will choose a clear winter's day for his researches. The fields are then bare of corn, the herbage is short, the trees and hedges are divested of their foliage, and, the sun being low, a broader shadow is cast from any irregularities of the surface; while the bracing freshness of the air will inspire strength and spirits for an investigation, which, if followed up with ardour, will often lead far beyond the limits of an ordinary walk or ride.

communication exists, as already stated, with the neighbouring fortress of Hochsdun; and a third with that of Axminster, and thence to the fort at Membury. These ancient roads, winding along the sides of the hills, and commanding views of the valleys as they pass along, bear all the characteristic marks of British trackways.

The fortress called Membury castle* is situated on an elevated spot of ground, which forms the point of a hill connected with the range called Baalay down†. The view from its summit is much more extensive than would be supposed on approaching this eminence by the gradual ascent from the valley, and includes most of the hill-fortresses in the neighbourhood. Towards the south, the eye passes over the town of Axminster to Musbury and Hochsdun castles, and along the vale to the sea at the mouth of the Axe. Westward the view is limited by the hills of Shute and Wilmington, but crosses the vale of the Yarty,

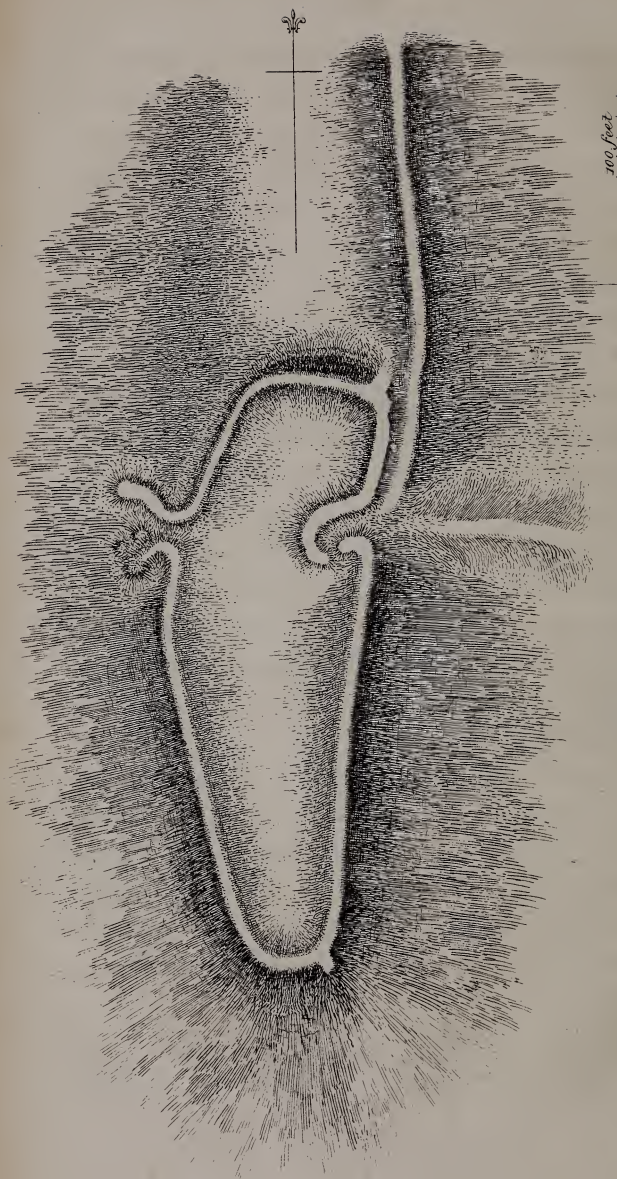
* In Domesday book, "Maneberie:" from the adjective "meinín," which in the Welsh language, a dialect of the British, signifies "stone;" or from the Anglo-Saxon "maegen," or "maen," strong; and "beorg," as in a foregoing note.

† It is not impossible that this hill derived its name from the idol of the Britons, Bel-ain, or, as the Romans called him, Belinus, the Chaldean and Phœnician Baal, who was worshipped by fire on hills and mountains; a practice the traces of which are scarcely yet extinguished in this country and in Ireland. See Polwhele's Historical Views of Devon, i. pp. 30, 31.

and includes Danes hill, with the beacon, in the parish of Stockland, and the hills of Yarcombe. On the north we look over Baaly down, as far as Neroche castle. Eastward, an extensive prospect includes the beacon hill in Chardstock, and, beyond it, Whitedown in Somersetshire; while at the farther distance the eye rests on Toller-down and Blackdown, with the bold elevations crowned with the three intrenchments of Pillesdon, Conig*, and Lambart's castles, in Dorsetshire.

The form of this earthwork is an irregular oblong, enclosing an area of about three acres, and, like that of Musbury, following the shape of the hill on three of its sides. It has a single vallum only, thrown up on the extreme verge of the natural declivity, not by the excavation of a fosse on the outside, but by the removal of the soil from the area, which is still about its original height in the centre, and slopes gradually to the base of the rampart. By these means the utmost possible space was obtained within; and, the height of the vallum being added to the acclivity, the summit was rendered more difficult of access. On the north, the ground extends for a considerable distance nearly at a level with the

* Conig castle, from the Anglo-Saxon "cyng," or "cyning," a king, was in all probability the camp of Egbert, when he encountered the Danes at Charmouth, in the year 833.



Membury Fort.

J D delin

area within the fort ; and on this side, the vallum, which is on the average about five feet high, appears to have been of much greater elevation. The ancient entrances are only two in number, and are situated opposite to each other, on the east and western sides, towards the northern extremity. A want of uniformity appears in the construction of these gateways : for, as will be observed by the accompanying ground-plan, one of them is defended by a rampart within the general line of the vallum ; the other, on the contrary, by an outwork : it seems, therefore, not improbable that the western gateway was formed at a subsequent period, and perhaps for the purpose of connecting this fort directly with that of Axminster, which it does by a road bearing the ancient name of “ The broad-way,” on part of its line. A road from the eastern gate of the fort joins a trackway leading from Neroche castle*, over Baaly down and Smalridge hill, to Stretford bridge, where it unites with the Fosse-way.

* The noble intrenchment called Neroche, Roche, or Rachiche castle, is situated on the north-eastern edge of Black-down, and commands an extensive prospect over the county of Somerset. This fortress has been attributed to the Romans (Collinson, *History of Somerset*, i. 16); but its great extent, its very irregular form, its numerous ramparts, and its remarkably deep intrenchments, as well as the tumuli which are scattered over the adjacent hills, seem to bespeak a much earlier date for its construction.

These two forts of Musbury and Membury have been ascribed to the Saxons, and with greater confidence to the Romans*. That they were occupied by the last-mentioned people is almost certain, but that they were originally constructed by them will admit of more than doubt. The Romans, except in times of peculiar danger, did not form their camps on hills and mountains, although they frequently occupied them when they found them so situated. The Britons, on the contrary, generally constructed their forts on the summits of hills of a ridge-like form, and commanding passes. We learn, also, on the authority of Polybius, that there was always one simple plan of castrametation among the Romans, which they used in every time and place. The form of their camps was invariably quadrangular, with a gateway on each side, in the middle of the vallum; and the order of their camps and stations was every where the same, the nature of the ground not being permitted to vary it†. The forms and situations of the two forts in question are utterly irreconcilable with these rules. The ground, in each instance, would have permitted the adoption of the quadrangular form; and, so

* Risdon's Survey of Devon, pp. 20, 23; Gough's Camden, p. 32; Polwhele, v. i. p. 187.

† Fosbroke's Encyclopædia of Antiquities, pp. 499, 503.

far as relates to the northern sides of them at least, the gates might have been placed in the middle of the ramparts. Neither do the works which cover the entrances correspond with the Roman manner of defending their gates, which were always formed, not obliquely, but directly through the valla. It may be further observed, that if these forts had been Roman, the roads connecting them with each other, instead of winding along the sides of the hills, would have been on their summits, and as direct as the face of the country would allow*; while the ramparts would have been stronger, and of greater elevation, unless towards the decline of the empire†, which was certainly not the period of their erection, as this part of the country was subdued in the reign of the emperor Claudius, at a period long before the Roman discipline had begun to relax. Upon the whole, then, there seems good reason to conclude that these two forts were of British formation, though at what precise date, and under what immediate circumstances, it is not now possible to ascertain. Thus far, indeed, may be said of the fort of Musbury, that, judging from its capricious form, the magnitude of its

* Anc. Wilts, v. ii. pp. 13, 14, 15.

† Encyc. Antiq. pp. 500, 503.

works, and the fact of its commanding the vale of the Axe, it may be considered of Celto-British construction; while that of Membury may be attributed to a somewhat later date, when the Britons, by their intercourse with the Greeks, had learned a more regular form of castrametation, though not so tactical and precise as that of the Romans who succeeded them in possession of the country. In addition to what has been stated, the discovery of a deposit having all the appearance of a British sepulture, at the foot of the hill on which the fort of Membury is constructed, proves that there was a settlement in the immediate neighbourhood, and may tend to strengthen the opinion that the intrenchment is of the period to which we have assigned it. In the year 1809, on digging for the foundation of a house, adjoining the road, on the eastern side of the church-yard, in the village of Membury, the workmen discovered a cavity in the limestone rock which they were moving. Within this cell was deposited an urn, composed of coarse clay, baked or dried in the sun, about nine inches in height, and ornamented with a rude border. It contained a quantity of ashes, with some fragments of bones and charcoal. Not any other remains accompanied the vessel, which soon after fell to pieces, but its

form was preserved, and is given in the accompanying outline.



The absence of coins, or any other memorial, points to an earlier period than that of the Romans for this sepulture, and it is an undoubted fact that the ancient Britons were in the practice of burning the bodies of their dead, and depositing the ashes in this manner.

Having thus attempted to investigate the right of the neighbouring hill-fortresses to an early date in British history, we will turn to the pretensions of the town of Axminster, which, being seated on an intermediate spot, and connected with them both, will be found to offer strong claims to a like distinction. That we may arrive at a correct conclusion whether the site of the town may be acknowledged as that of a British village, it will be requisite first to enumerate the distinguishing marks by which the position of such a settlement may be recognised. Strabo observes, that the Britons fence-in large circles

with trees, where, having constructed huts, they and their herds dwell together: and we learn from Polybius, and Cæsar, that before the Roman conquest their settlements were not surrounded by a wall, but, as already mentioned, were fortified by a ditch and a mound of earth. The Britons often placed their villages at the intersection of their roads, on the sides of which they threw up banks at the entrances, by way of defence. They were desirous, if possible, of settling near a stream, on a position defended by nature, and especially on a promontory having a gentle declivity to a river. Their earthworks were irregular in form, but generally corresponded in shape with that of the hill-side on which they stood*. These are the principal known peculiarities of the British settlements; and it is impossible not to observe the remarkable agreement with these features which the site of the town of Axminster presents, especially if viewed on the approach to it from the west, and if the form of the declivity called the Castle hill be examined, with that of the ground upon which the town stands, sloping gradually down to the river.

We first proceed to notice the fact that this place is situated at the point of intersection of two of the principal ancient roads of the west of Eng-

* Anc. Wilts. passim. Encyc. Antiq. p. 520.

land, which bear in all their features, and in the names of places through which they pass, very decisive evidence of their having been British trackways*.

The first and principal of these roads is the ancient Ikeneld-street, or rather a branch of it, which, with but little deviation from the present great western road, crosses the parish and the town of Axminster almost in a direct line from east to west. This is one of the four great British roads, subsequently used and improved by the Romans, which are thus enumerated in the rhyming Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester :

“Fram the south into the north takith Erninge-strete,
 “Fram the est into the west goth Ikenelde-strete,
 “Fram south-est to north-west that is sumdel grete,
 “Fram Dover into Chestre goth Watlynge-strete.
 “The ferthe of thise is most of alle, that tilleth from Toteneys,
 “Fram the one ende of Cornwaile anone to Cateneys,
 “Fram the south-west to north-est into Englonde’s end.
 “Fosse, men calleth thilke way, that by many toun doth
 wende.”

The Ikeneld or Icening street, or Ickling dyke, derives its name and origin from the country of the Icenî. It commenced on the coast of Norfolk, and passed through Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, and Oxfordshire, to Streatley-upon-Thames, where

* The reader whose taste may lead him to traverse the ancient roads of this island will find it of advantage to consult the excellent survey by Colonel Mudge, under the authority of the Board of Ordnance ; a map which is of great assistance to the antiquary, in common with other local investigators.

it divided; one branch of it leading through Berkshire and Wiltshire to the great temple at Abury; and the other, also through Berkshire, to Old Sarum, Woodyates, Dorchester, Eggardun, Bridport, Axminster, Honiton, Exeter, Totnes, &c. to to the Land's-end*. At Dorchester, which is a place surrounded on all sides by numerous and interesting vestiges of the Britons†, the Ikeneld street divides into several branches‡, the two principal of which run nearly parallel with each other to Exeter. Of these, the line which, strictly considered, is the continuation of the Ikeneld, being that on which the Roman military way was afterwards constructed, leaves Dorchester on the western side, and passes over Bradford down, among numerous barrows§, to the British fortress of Eggardun; and thence, through Loders, by Boarsbarrow||, to the eastern entrance of the town of Bridport. At this place it is joined by another trackway, which, having left Dorchester on the

* Stukeley, *Itin. Curios. Iter.* vi. p. 159; Lysons's *Mag. Brit.* vol. vi. p. cccxii.; *Anc. Wilts*, vol. ii. p. 22.

† Hutchins's *Dorset.* vol. i. p. 373.

‡ The memory of this ancient road is perpetuated near Dorchester, by a spot called "Icen hedges," and a house bearing the name of "Icen cottage."

§ Hutchins's *Dorset.* *Intro.* p. xx.

|| The British roads were generally attended by tumuli (*Anc. Wilts*, ii. 13), and the name of this place seems to indicate the position of one of them. So also among the eastern nations: see *Jeremiah* xxxi. 21, and *Harmer's Observations*, ii. 283.

south-west, runs to Maiden castle, a well known fortress of British construction; and thence, through Martin's town and Steepleton, to Winterbourn. A druidical circle of nine stones, and the remains of a cromlech, still existing by the road side, here attest its course*; which, lined with barrows, proceeds along the down, passing a hamlet called Walditch, or Olditch, to Bridport; where, forming a junction with its fellow, the united road leads through the town to Chideock and Morcombelake. At this place it again divides into two branches, of which the most direct bends northwards to Whitechurch cross, Wootton†, and Wootton street; from which place, leading along the side of the hill, by a way called Green lane, it gains the summit, and, crossing the turnpike road from Lyme-Regis to Crewkerne, enters the county of Devon and the parish of Axminster about half a mile to the north of the present great western road, which it soon after joins by a trackway called Gore lane‡, and proceeds with it to the town of Axminster. From this place its course is identical

* Hutchins's Dorset. vol. i. p. 303.

† This name obviously designates "the town in the wood." The village is at the entrance of the vale of Marshwood.

‡ This term is probably derived from the Anglo-Saxon "gor," dirt; and the lane has thus retained its title from the Saxon period, when the British road, having been neglected for the adjacent Roman one, acquired its distinguishing appellation.

with that of the Roman road, to be hereafter mentioned; unless, bending to the right at the yew-tree on Kilmington common, it avoided Shute hill, and, passing the places called Stedehays and Cockroad, fell into the line of the subsequent Roman road at the top of Moorcock's hill; beyond which a little fort called Castlewood overlooks it boldly on the left hand. On its approach to the town of Honiton also, the British Ikeneld seems to have taken a lower line than the Roman road, and to have passed by the lane, on the left of the present toll-gate, across the town to Awlescombe, Hembury fort, and Exeter*. The other branch, which we left at Morcombelake, proceeds from that place, over Stonebarrow hill†, to Charmouth and Lyme-Regis, by the characteristic names of Colway lane‡, Hay lane§, and Gore lane, and along the hills between the forts of Hochsdun and Musbury, to Colyford, where it again divides into branches; one of which leads to Hembury fort, and the other to Exeter, by Sidbury and Woodbury castles. These lines of road

* The line here traced coincides generally, but not entirely, with that adopted for the course of the British Ikeneld by Lysons. *Mag. Brit.* vol. vi. p. cccxii.

† See the foregoing note, p. 24.

‡ "Col," in the British language, signifies "the ridge or neck of a hill." Colway therefore means literally "the ridge-way," which is a name frequently pointing out an ancient road.

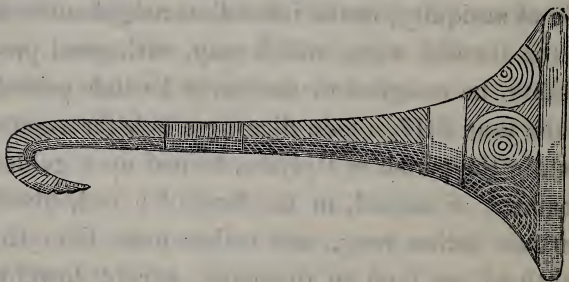
§ From the Anglo-Saxon "heah," high.

will be noticed in the next chapter, bearing as they do conspicuous marks of Roman occupation. The last-mentioned division of the Ikeneld, from Morcombelake, seems to have followed the windings of the coast, for the facilities of commerce, and perhaps to reach Lyme and Seaton, which in very early times were trading places of considerable importance*. The line through Axminster, being more direct, was subsequently chosen by the Romans for their military road, on their unvarying principle of straight lines of communication.

Here we must pause, to notice the discovery of a relic of antiquity, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Ikeneld way, which may, with great probability, be assigned to the early British period. In the year 1817, a man digging a hole for a gatepost, in the parish of Uplyme, turned up a golden ornament or utensil, in the form of a rod, about fourteen inches long, and rather more than the eighth of an inch in diameter, except towards the ends, where it gradually increased in size, and finished like the top of a ramrod, but without ornament of any sort. It was in quality better than our standard gold, flexible, and in weight about two ounces. This interesting article was

* Roberts's Hist. of Lyme-Regis, p. 5.; Leland's Itinerary vol. iii. p. 71; Stukeley, Iter. vi.

sold to a watch-maker at Axminster, who, acquainted only with its intrinsic value, consigned it to the melting-pot. The fragment of a relic of similar form, but of larger size, was dug up at Leighton-Buzzard, an ancient town in Bedfordshire on the Ikeneld way, in the year 1824. It also was of gold, nearly pure, and weighed almost five ounces. The large end had a plain flat edge, within which it was slightly concaved; the other end was twisted and broken off. The lines with which it was ornamented, in the manner represented by the accompanying sketch, were engraved with tolerable regularity*.



It is not easy to decide to what purpose these precious relics were applicable. They have some resemblance to the British ornament called a "torquis;" but the splendid specimen of that ornament found on Cader Idris, in the year 1823, consists of rods of

* This article was purchased by Messrs. Bateman of London, goldsmiths, who favoured the writer with a description of it.

gold wreathed together, and differs from the articles under notice in being strongest in the middle and of smaller size towards the ends, which are turned in the form of hooks, to fasten them together*. These, on the contrary, were straight, and unfurnished with any apparatus for uniting the ends; besides, if intended for encircling the neck, or for the support of any part of the dress, that found at Uplyme, judging from its length, could have been suited only to a child†. If a conjecture might be hazarded where so wide a field is open for its exercise, it would be, that these relics were the golden wands used by the Druids in their mysterious rites. Among the ancients, the verge was the symbol of government and administration, as the sceptre was the mark of imperial dignity; and with the Orientals, a golden wand was the badge of office‡.

* This curious relic of antiquity is now in the possession of Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, Bart. It is forty-two inches long, weighs eight ounces and eight pennyweights, and is intrinsically worth 36*l*. An account of the circumstances attending its discovery appeared in the *Cambrian Quarterly Magazine*, vol. i. p. 242. See also the description of another in the "*Vetusta Monumenta*," vol. v. plate xxix. fig. 2.

† One precisely similar in size and form was found, by a man now living, about twenty inches below the surface, in a moory spot at Burle, near Horchester, in Dorsetshire.

‡ *Encyc. Antiq.* pp. 314, 346. "The officiating Druid was clothed in a white garment that swept the ground: on his head he wore the tiara: he had the anguinum, or serpent's egg, as the ensign of his order: his temples were encircled with a wreath

There is yet another British road from Dorchester to Axminster, which is not only conspicuous on the map, but is readily traced by the etymology of the places on its course. Leaving Dorchester on the north-west, it passes through the villages of Bradford, where it crosses the river Frome, Stratton (or Street town), Grimstone, Frampton, and Crockway, to Maiden Newton*. From this place it leads over White-sheet hill, bearing the title of Cromlech lane, to Rampisham down, Toller down, and the Hore-stones†, where a branch leads off through Winniard's gap, to join the Fosse way coming from Ilchester. The term Cromlech lane, is now the only memorial of a cromlech which formerly stood close to the side of this road, on the summit of the down, near a way

of oak leaves; and he waved in his hand the magic rod." Polwhele, *Hist. Views of Devon*, p. 28. The wand of the Druids was perhaps the prototype of the *virgula divinatoria*, or divining rod, still in use among the miners of Cornwall and Somerset, for the discovery of minerals and springs below the surface. In the last mentioned county it is called "the doucing rod."

* This road becomes remarkably conspicuous under the Roman occupation. Between Frampton and Maiden-Newton, on the border of the river, some very beautiful tessellated pavements were discovered in the year 1794. (*Savage's Hist. of Dorchester*, p. 69).—At the point of the hill east of Frampton, a direct and obvious branch leads along the summit to the Roman station, and the lime pits at Horchester, where remains have been found, and thence to Yeovil and Ilchester.

† These ancient way-marks stand one on each side of the road, opposite to each other. For some account of Hore-stones see note, p. 58.

leading to Wraxall. The upright stones have long since been removed ; but the upper stone was till very lately to be seen there. It was about five feet long and three wide, and had in the middle a hollow place, of about a foot in diameter, which the common people called "the crock." The stone was held in superstitious veneration by the neighbouring peasantry, and the fact of its having been a sacrificial altar is preserved in the traditional tales of blood and slaughter which are still related in connexion with it ; but this interesting relic of past ages has itself become a sacrifice to the genius of modern improvement, having been broken up for the repair of the road. From the Hore-stones our trackway proceeds to Beaminster down, where a very conspicuous barrow points out its course, and over Horn hill, through Broadwinsor, to the intrenchments of Pillesdon pen and Lambart's castle. Leaving these forts, it proceeds to Stonebarrow and Hawkchurch common ; and thence, along the hill, where it forms the border of the county of Devon and crosses the Ikeneld way, to Musbury castle, the British fortress which has been described. On Hawkchurch common, a branch, now partially covered by enclosures, led over Stanbury, or Stonebarrow hill ; at the foot of which it again divided ; one part leading by Secktor lane to a junction with the Ikeneld way, at a spot

called Lane orchard, about half a mile from the town of Axminster; and the other, across the fields, where its traces are in some places yet visible, and by a way now very justly called Evil lane, to an union with the Foss road at the northern entrance of the town. Thus far for the Ikeneld way, and those in connexion with it.

The other principal road which claims our attention as leading into and through the town of Axminster, is a branch of the ancient fosse-way of the Britons, coming from Bath, through Ilchester, to Exeter. This branch leaves the main road at Sevington, and proceeds over Chard common, through the tything of Street, to Stretford bridge and Axminster, where it crosses the Ikeneld way. From this place it leads on to Musbury, where it is connected with the hill fortress, and continues to the harbour at the mouth of the Axe, crossing the other branch of the Ikeneld near Axebridge. There can be no doubt of the British origin of this road, which is attested by the irregularity of the line which it takes; but as its features are much more conspicuous under its Roman occupation, a more particular notice of it will be deferred to the next chapter.

After so great a lapse of time, it is scarcely to be expected that any actual traces should be visible of the roads we have described, unless it be on

such parts of them as were abandoned by the Romans for a more direct or a more elevated course, and have been spared from the widening and levelling propensities of modern trustees and way-wardens. If, however, any such should be asked for, the line from Morcombelake to Gore lane, on the one branch of the Ikeneld, and that of Colway lane, north of Lyme-Regis, on the other, are British roads which have perhaps suffered as few innovations for the last eighteen or twenty centuries as any which could be pointed out in this neighbourhood. With reference to the practice of the Britons in throwing up banks of earth on each side of the entrances to their towns, it may be observed, that no effort of the imagination will be requisite for believing that such was the case at Axminster, as a considerable elevation of the ground may be remarked on each side of the entrances to the town, both on the Ikeneld and the Fosse-way.

We will now advert to an open space within the town, which bears the appellation of "the castle," though it has long ago been divested of the character of a military post. Towns among the Britons, as with the Gauls, were, in their origin, merely fortresses to secure the people and their cattle from sudden irruption or attack; but as the population increased, and civilization ad-

vanced, their fortified places were enlarged in compass, and were provided with market-places within their intrenchments*. An area within the town of Axminster, which comprises the market-place, upon "the castle hill," appears to have been of this description†. It is a projecting point or extremity of the natural declivity which defended the town on the north-western side; but there are marks of its having been an intrenchment, in the vestiges of a fosse, which may be distinctly traced. That it may be ascribed to the British period is extremely probable, when we consider not only its situation as respects the Ikeneld and the Fosse-way, which bend out of their course to reach it, but that it is immediately connected by ancient roads with the British forts of Musbury and Membury. With the last-mentioned intrenchment, also, there is a second communication, which seems to have been provided in case of the other road being in possession of an enemy. From the northern side of Axminster castle a narrow way winds along under the hill, and, crossing the river at the distance of half a

* "*Hostes muro turribusque dejecti, in foro ac locis patentioribus cuneatim constitunt.*" Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.* l. vii. s. 27.

† The hundred courts have been held on this spot from time immemorial till within a few years. Such courts were anciently held in fortified places, on account of security. That of a hundred in Gloucestershire, was held in the intrenchment called Salmonsbury. *Encyc. Antiq.* p. 512.

mile, proceeds to a junction with Smalridge lane, which, as before stated, leads directly from the eastern gate of Membury fort. A parochial fortress having such a covert way to it is a known accompaniment to a British village*. The relative situation of the castle to the town, and its position as respects the roads, will be understood by a reference to the ground plan in front] of this volume.

To the foregoing may be added the consideration, that, supported by other indications, the irregular shape and disposition of the place is a presumptive proof of its British origin†, when contrasted with the wide and straight streets of the neighbouring towns, which have been built upon the line of the Roman road, at times subsequent to its formation—such, for instance, as Dorchester, Bridport, and Honiton.

It remains only to advert to the ancient name of the place. The settlements of the Britons derived their names in most instances from their locality; and the hills, woods, and streams conveyed their appellations to the collected habitations situated within their boundaries or on their banks. Thus it was with the town of Axminster,

* Encyc. Antiq. pp. 522, 922; Gent. Mag. vol. xciv. i. p. 149.

† Anc. Wilts, vol. ii. p. 13.

which, prior to the Saxon period, was called Axa, or Asca, from the name of the river below, derived, like that of the Exe, from "Isca," a British term signifying a stream, and common to many rivers in ancient Britain*.

We have thus attempted to bring forward such proofs as we possess that the town of Axminster was a British settlement; and if it be objected that no remains of British antiquity are known to have been discovered here, it may be rejoined, that a place which has been built upon for so many centuries can scarcely be expected to afford any relics, as during the first excavations alone they could have been discovered; and that very few remains can be supposed to exist of a people so generally uncivilized and so poor as the Britons. They were not possessed of a coinage before the coming of the Romans, and their pottery was composed of a base and perishable material†.

By way, then, of summing up, we will observe, that this town is placed upon a spot of ground precisely such as the Britons are known to have chosen for their settlements,—that it is a point

* Risdon's Survey, p. 17; Horsley's *Britannia Romana*, p. 463. The word "Isca" signifies water in the Irish language, which is a dialect of the British. So the Wysg, or "Usk," in Wales, and many others.

† For an account of a British drinking-cup in the writer's possession, see *Gent. Mag.* xcvi. ii. p. 99.

where several British roads meet ; that it is within view of, and connected with, two British forts ; and that from one of those forts a covert way leads to an intrenched spot within its area, called the castle, presenting all the features of an ancient place of defence, which was the origin and character of all the Celtic and British towns.

British and Roman Remains

IN THE

VICINITY OF AXMINSTER.

PART II.—Roman Remains.

Roman Invasions—Roads—Itineraries—Ikeneld street—Moridunum—Coins—Remains—Fosse way—Morwood's Causeway—Vicinal ways—Castellum at Weycroft—Forts—Sepulture—Other Remains—Axminster a Station—Coins found there—Conclusion.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

BY JAMES MADISON

IN TWO VOLUMES

Roman Remains

IN THE

VICINITY OF AXMINSTER.

THE contents of the foregoing chapter will have cleared the way in a great degree for an inquiry into the vestiges of the Romans in the neighbourhood of the town of Axminster; and for a consideration, whether that place may be fixed upon as the site of one of their stations.

The Britons successfully withstood the power of the Roman arms for a long period of time, not by any attainments of military skill, but by the exertion of a desperate courage, which urged them to fight bravely in defence of their hereditary though uncivilized freedom; and it is certain, that, to whatever cause it may be attributed, the progress of Julius Cæsar, in each of his attempts on this island, was confined to a comparatively small space: indeed, to use the words of Tacitus, “He can only be said to have struck the natives with terror,

and to have made himself master of the seashore*.” Nor was it until the reign of the emperor Claudius, who himself remained some years in Britain, that the Romans gained a firm footing, and extended their conquests over almost the whole of the southern parts of the island. This expedition took place A.D. 43, when a powerful army was sent from Gaul, under the command of Aulus Plautius, who was followed by the emperor in person, and succeeded by Vespasian. We learn from Tacitus, that “Claudius transported into Britain an army composed of regular legions, besides a large body of auxiliaries. With the officers appointed to conduct the war he joined Vespasian, who there laid the foundation of that success which afterwards attended him. Several states were conquered, kings were led in captivity, and the fates beheld Vespasian giving an earnest of his future glory †.” According to Suetonius, he fought thirty battles with the Britons, overcame two powerful nations, took more than twenty towns, and reduced the Isle of Wight to subjection ‡.

Four books of the Annals of Tacitus, which embraced the first six years of the reign of Claudius, are unhappily lost to the world ; but there is every

* Life of Agricola, by Murphy, s. 13. Lucan also says of Cæsar, “Territa quæsitis ostendit terga Britannis.”

† Idem.

‡ Life of Vespasian, s. 4.

reason to think, with a distinguished author of the present day, who has thrown greater light on British antiquities than any previous writer, that (to use his own words) “these conquests of Vespasian have more connexion with our western district than any of the preceding victories: for the two strong nations are supposed to have been the Belgæ and Danmonii; and though I cannot be justified in attributing the numerous camps we find dispersed in these districts to the original construction of the Romans, yet we may perhaps allow the large camp at Amesbury in Wiltshire, still bearing the name of Vespasian’s camp, to have been one of the many occupied by that commander*.” At any rate, it appears to be certain that the south-western parts of the island were conquered during the first nine years of the emperor Claudius, and prior to the year 50, which was the date of the arrival of Publius Ostorius Scapula; for Tacitus informs us that, on the arrival of that officer the barbarians made an irruption into the territory of the states in alliance with Rome, carrying devastation through the country: and it is evident from his account, that the consequent advance of Ostorius was against the inhabitants of the midland counties. Now as, on the authority of the same historian, it was the maxim of Ostorius

* Ancient Wilts, vol. ii. p. 8.

not to push his conquests till every thing had been secured in his rear, there seems no doubt that the tribes of the Belgæ, the Morini, and the Danmonii, which he left behind him, were then in a state of subjection : besides, as the whole progress of the Roman arms in Britain, from the arrival of Ostorius to the resignation of Agricola, in the reign of Domitian, is distinctly recorded in the existing books of Tacitus, and no mention whatever is made of these western provinces, it seems unquestionable, that, having been subdued during the period comprised within that portion of the history which is lost, they were subsequently to that time in alliance with Rome. We may therefore very safely conclude that the south-western parts of the kingdom were not subject to scenes of warfare after the time of Vespasian, and we are warranted in assigning to the period of that commander such remains of Roman military works as any researches in this district may bring forward to notice*.

* So little have some writers on the local antiquities of Devon been acquainted with the remains of Roman power in this neighbourhood, that it was once doubted whether that people ever gained possession of the county, or advanced their conquests farther westward than Dorsetshire ; and not very long since, it was maintained that Exeter was the farthest point of their progress westward. Dr. Borlase, however, discovered existing Roman remains in the remotest parts of Cornwall, sufficient to attest a long and peaceable possession of that county ; and subsequent discoveries have fully established the fact.

Of all the noble and stupendous marks of their power, their military discipline, and their civilization, which the Romans left behind them in this island, there are none, excepting the Picts' wall, which remain more conspicuous to the present day, and are more interesting to the antiquary, than the remains of their fortified camps and of their military roads. They were, of course, for a time under the necessity of adopting the British trackways for the passage of their troops, the conveyance of provisions, and other military and civil purposes; but after the country was subdued, and they were no longer engaged in their harassing warfare with the Britons, the troops, as well as the natives, were employed, according to the uniform practice of the Romans, in constructing public works, and among them military ways for connecting the several camps and stations: these ways were frequently continued upon the ancient lines of road, if the latter could by alteration be made to fall in with their own invariable plan and method of constructing them*. Of them, besides a great number of less consequence, there were four principal ones, which are thus mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon laws of Edward the Confessor:—"Pax Regis multiplex est alia quem habent

* Horsley's Brit. Rom. p. 391; Anc. Wilts, vol. ii. p. 13.

quatuor chemini, Watlinge strete, Fosse, Hicknilde strete, et Erminge strete, quorum duo in longitudinem regni, alii duo in latitudinem, distenduntur.” The inferior roads are thus described :—“ Chemini vero minores, de civitate ad civitatem, de burgis ad burgos ducentes, per quos mercata vehuntur et cetera negotia fiunt, sub lege comitatus sunt*.” The Roman roads were distinguished by several different titles†; but it will suffice to mention only their military and vicinal ways, as applicable to those in this neighbourhood; observing merely, that such public roads as were appropriated to commercial uses were continued on the lines of the old British trackways, without any material alteration. The military ways were constructed especially for the marching routes of the army, and were distinguished by their comparative breadth and elevation‡, and by being invariably carried forward in a direct line§. This practice was never deviated from, except in case of some local obstruction, such as a steep mountain or a deep ravine, or where the roads diverge from their course to ap-

* *Inter Leges Sax.* Edw. cap. 12.

† Gough's *Camden*. *Intro.* p. xlvii.

‡ *Anc. Wilts.* ii. p. 13; *Encyc. Antiq.* p. 516.

§ Isidore, quoted by *Camden*, *ut supra*. This fact is self-evident, on the inspection of any good map on a large scale with the eye of an antiquary.

proach or leave a station*. The vicinal ways were cross roads, for general purposes, leading from town to town and from station to station, and they frequently intersected the greater roads at right angles†.

The Roman roads were constructed of various substances, according to the nature of the soil, the face of the country over which they passed, and the materials which the surrounding district supplied: they were sometimes regularly paved with large stones; sometimes composed of gravel and flints; and sometimes, on the hills, where the soil was dry, they consisted of an elevated ridge covered with turf. In some places a rampart of earth, and in others a ditch, formed a boundary on each side‡.

Towns and stations, for the accommodation of troops, were established on these roads, at regular distances, seldom exceeding twenty miles from each other. Under the term station are generally included the several camps, hyberna, stativa, and æstiva, “*stationes agrariæ*” or advanced posts to prevent surprise, ensure the safety of provisions, &c.; as also a description of halting place, called

* Nichols's Leicest. Introd.; Anc. Wilts. ii. p. 15; Encyc. Antiq. p. 517.

† Brit. Rom. p. 387; Encyc. Antiq. p. 517.

‡ Plot's Oxfordsh. p. 321; Stukeley, Iter. vi.; Borlase's Cornw. p. 328; Encyc. Antiq. p. 517.

a “mutatio,” which was an inn for changing horses and affording accommodation to travellers. The sides of the roads were furnished with milestones, and stones for mounting horses, stirrups not having been at that time invented*.

Previously to pointing out the course of the Roman roads in the neighbourhood of Axminster, it will be necessary to notice the works known as the Itineraries of Antonine and Richard. These mention the different stations on detached portions of the principal roads, with the number of Roman miles between them, and the aggregate distance of the whole journey. They are supposed to have been the routes allotted for the marches of the Roman troops, or to have shewn the roads and stations appointed for the Roman magistrates in taking their progress for the administration of justice†.—Antiquaries are divided on the question of to whom the itinerary which passes under the name of Antonine may be attributed: some have ascribed it to one or other of the Roman emperors of that name; while a later writer intimates that it was the journal of a person who is supposed to have accompanied the emperor Hadrian through the several parts of Britain therein mentioned‡.

* Gough's Camden. Introd.; Encyc. Antiq. p. 519.

† Id. Id. p. 277.

‡ Gough's Camden. Introd.; Anc. Wilts. ii. p. 17.

The itinerary by Richard of Cirencester, a learned monk of Westminster, who lived about the end of the fourteenth century, is attached to his account of Roman Britain, with an ancient map of the country*, and, although in several parts evidently copied from Antonine, is considered of good authority†.

Of the four principal roads just mentioned, the Hicknild or Ikeneld street, and the Fosseway, or rather branches of them, cross each other in the town of Axminster. The foregoing chapter pointed out such features of these roads as proved them to have been originally of British formation, and their appearance will now be investigated under the occupation of a people who improved the arts of civilized life wherever they extended their dominion.

Although the Fosse is considered to have been the road chiefly used by the Romans in their intercourse with Isca Danmoniorum (Exeter) and the principal stations in the west‡, the Ikeneld is believed to have been adopted by them at a much earlier period of time; and will therefore have the first claim on our attention. The general

* This work, which was discovered in Denmark, was published at Copenhagen in 1757, and in London, by Dr. Stukeley, in the same year.

† Anc. Wilts. ii. p. 17.

‡ Borlase's Cornwall, p. 330, note.

line of this road from the coast of Norfolk to Exeter has been already traced; and we shall find that the Roman military way, in the latter part of its course, was constructed upon it with but little deviation. The itineraries of Antonine and Richard, so far as they mention this road, will be here inserted: but it may be remarked, that the latter has evidently in this instance copied from the former, as one station at least must have been omitted between Old Sarum and Dorchester; the whole distance being computed at twenty-one Roman miles only, and the aggregate amount of miles between the several stations in Antonine's iter being less by nine than the total mentioned at the head of the route.

“ Antonini Iter xv.*”

“ A Calleva Iscam Dumnoniorum, MP. cxxxvi.

Calleva	Henley.
Vindomi	MP. xv.....Silchester.
Venta Belgarum	xxi.....Winchester.
Brige	xi.....Broughton.
Sorbioduni.....	viii.....Old Sarum.
Vindogladia	xii.....Winbourn.
Durnovaria	ix.....Dorchester.
Moriduno	xxxvi.....Seaton.
Isca dum Noniorum	xv.....Exeter.”

* Antonini Iter Britanniarum, illust. T. Gale, Lond. 1709, p. 135.

“ Ricardi Iter xvi.*”

“ A Londinio (London) Ceniam (Tregony).

Venta Belgarum	MP. xc.	Winchester.
Brige	xi.	Broughton.
Sorbiodunum	viii.	Old Sarum.
Ventageladia or Vindocladia	xii.	Winburn Minster.
Durnovaria	ix.	Dorchester.
Muridunum or Moridunum	xxxiii.	Seaton.
Isca Dunmoniorum	xv.	Exeter.”

The modern names are here affixed on the authority of Dr. Gale, supported by Dr. Stukeley and most of the subsequent writers; but doubts have been more recently entertained on the propriety of the positions given to two of these stations, viz. Vindocladia and Moridunum. The successful researches of the eminent individual whose work has been so often referred to, and who has done more for the illustration of British and Roman antiquities in this island than any other writer, have induced him to fix the site of the former at Gussage, instead of Wimbourn†. Moridunum has been appropriated to Seaton, but there is abundant reason to agree with some later writers in placing this station at or near Hembury fort‡. If Seaton be Moridunum, and the Ikeneld

* Stukeley's "Richard of Cirencester," p. 59.

† Anc. Wilts, ii. p. 37.

‡ Camden, Add. by Gough, p. 32; Reynolds's Iter Britanniarum, p. 376; Polwhele's Devon, i. p. 183, n.

way passed through Axminster, as all the writers agree, a road must have struck off to that place at a right angle with its course, which has never been discovered, and is quite opposed to the general direction of Roman military roads. A Roman road, which was in its origin a branch of the British Ikeneld, leads, as we shall find, along the coast about a mile from Seaton; but it is devious and narrow on part of its line, and carries with it no pretensions to a military way. Dr. Gale attributes the distinction to Seaton from one circumstance alone, in which, although misinformed, he has been implicitly copied by many subsequent writers: his words are these:—"Mor, Britannis est Mare, et super collem (Dunum) juxta mare eminet hoc oppidum, unde et nomen ei tam antiquum, quam hodiernum, Seaton*." This village, on the contrary, is seated entirely in the valley, and its distance both from Dorchester and Exeter disagrees widely with the itineraries. The etymology of "Moridunum," in the Gaelic, denotes "the hill-fortress," which is quite applicable to the situation of Hembury fort, where Roman coins and other remains have been found †,

* Anton. Iter. p. 137. This reasoning would apply quite as forcibly to a hamlet called Seatown, on the coast of Dorset, which is within a mile of the Roman military way.

† Archæologia, vol. xiv. App.; Lysons, vi. p. cccxlix.; Dyer's Comment. on Richard of Cirencester, p. 159.

and which is at the intermediate distance from Isca Danmoniorum and Durnovaria, as laid down with but little variation in both the itineraries*. It is also a remarkable confirmation of Hembury fort for the site of Moridunum, that the number of Roman miles to that station from Durnovaria, according to Antonine's Itinerary—viz. thirty-six—corresponds precisely with the number of English miles from Dorchester to Hembury fort—viz. forty and a half—on the line which we are about to trace†.

The Via Iceniana, or Ikeneld street, leaves the western end of Dorchester with a perfectly straight course as far as Bradford heath, where it bends off in a very conspicuous line north of the village of Winterbourne, and along the ridge of the hill, to reach Eggardun, a fortress undoubtedly occupied by the Romans, though of British construction‡. From the eastern gate of this in-

* It may be observed here, as a remarkable coincidence, that an estate adjoining the fort of Eggardun, in Dorsetshire, which was a Roman station, bears the name of Hembury (Hutchins, i. p. 288); and near Hembury fort, in Devon, is a farm called Uggarton.

† This computation is made by the scale which Sir Richard Hoare found to be true—viz. that nineteen Roman miles were equal to twenty-one miles and three furlongs English. *Anc. Wilts*, ii. p. 58.

‡ Stukeley, *Itin. Cur.* pp. 153, 160; Hutchins's *Dorset*, ed. 1774, vol. i. pp. 289, 607. If it were not certain that several stations have been omitted in both the itineraries, it would be remarkable that one so conspicuous as this should not be noticed.

trenchment it proceeds in an obvious form, down the hill on the north of the village of Askerswell, by a place called Spyway green, to a junction with the present turnpike road, with which it is identified through Bridport and Chidiok (formerly Chidwick), to Morcombelake. The remains of the Ikeneld street are distinctly to be traced on almost the whole distance from Dorchester to Askerswell. It is composed of flints, with flat stones on the borders and a ditch on both sides, and is called the "Ridge-way," as it takes the ridge of the hill, and commands extensive views of the country. In the year 1825, when workmen were employed on the descent of the hill, near Spyway green, in breaking up the Roman road for the repair of the adjacent parish way, an opportunity occurred to the writer for examining its actual structure. It was composed of a bed of large flints laid on the substratum of chalk, with a thick layer of smaller stones on the top, and the whole had formed a mass almost as compact as a wall. At Morcombelake the modern road abandons the Ikeneld for a more level line; while the latter, passing a spot known by the name of "Cold Harbour," a "statio militaris," or resting-place*, gains the summit of Stone-

* "Here-berga, statio, mansio : a station where the army rested in their march." (*Somner*). See also *Anc. Wilts*, vol. ii. pp. 16, 96, 97. The term "Cold harbour" is very frequently found in the vicinity of Roman roads.

barrow hill, and reaches Charmouth, where its course is marked by the appellation of "strete," anciently given to lands which, under that name, were held of the manor by John Beauchamp, in the reign of Richard the Second. At Charmouth the road divides, and forms two branches, leading by different routes to Exeter. One, which follows the British trackway along the coast, will be again adverted to; the other, which was the military way—the Ikeneld properly so called—proceeds boldly over Charmouth hill, passing a farm called Hogchester* and a coppice called Street-wood†, to Pen inn‡, and thence over the hills called

* From the German "hoch," high, and the Latin "castra," a camp; from which latter the derivation "chester" is well known, and that its occurrence designates a Roman station. The site of this place, which adjoins the Ikeneld-way at its division into two branches, may perhaps be the position of a "statio agraria," which was a post often found at the concurrence of roads. See Horsley, *Brit. Rom.* p. 392, and *Encyc. Antiq.* pp. 519, 520.—Not any remains are known to have been found here; nor, although the adjacent ground presents great irregularity of surface, are there any traces of an intrenchment. The site of the farm buildings is traditionally said to have been that of a religious house of some description.

† This epithet "street" originated in the Latin "stratum," and points out the course of a Roman road. *Brit. Rom.* p. 391; Whitaker's *Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 114; *Anc. Wilts*, vol. ii p. 16; *Encyc. Antiq.* p. 520.

‡ This public-house derives its name from the elevated point of the neighbouring hill. "Pen," in the British language, signifies a head, or point, and its application to such commanding heights is very frequent. Pillesdon pen in this vicinity is another instance.

Greenway head and Barrowshot hill, in the line of the present turnpike road to Axminster.

But on these hills we must pause, to notice some remains which have been brought to light, and which attest the occupation of the district by the Romans. In a field called "Holcombe bottom," in the parish of Uplyme, which is skirted by the road, a man, some years ago, employed in removing a large heap of stones, provincially termed "a stone-burrow," discovered an earthen vessel containing a very large number of Roman coins, which he carried to Exeter for sale.

A Roman deposit was also found in the year 1818, in a field called "Shellacres," on Higher Wild farm, about a quarter of a mile from the Ikeneld way, near Greenway head. On removing an irregular heap of stones, the workmen discovered twenty-two silver coins, of small size; of which ten only remain in tolerable preservation, and are in the possession of a gentleman at Axminster: five of them are of Antoninus Pius; one of Domitian; one of Vespasian; one of Trajan; one of Lucilla, wife of Lucius Verus; and one of Marcia Otacilia Severa, wife of Julius Philippus.

Returning to our road, it must be observed, before we proceed, that from the top of Barrowshot hill a vicinal way leads to the hamlet called Wick; the name of which, derived from the

Latin "vicus," is an evidence of the neighbouring Roman road*. On gaining the summit of the hill, above the inn called Hunter's lodge, and immediately on the border of the county of Devon, the Ikeneld is seen before us at the distance of four miles, stretching in a direct line over Shute hill: and here it must not escape notice, that, instead of reaching that point in a direction perfectly straight, which it might have done by the line of the vicinal way called Woodbury lane, it bends to the right, at the foot of Barrowshot hill, to reach the town of Axminster, and the ancient ford over the river Axe, where a bridge, bespeaking its antiquity in its name Bow bridge, crosses the stream†. Having left the town, and recovered

* Anc. Wilts, vol. ii. p. 16. The hamlet of Wick has given its name to the manor from the time of Edward the Confessor, and designates one of the tythings in the parish of Axminster.

† This bridge in all probability derived its name at the early period of its erection from the unusual form of its structure, being arched in form of a bow; as did Bow bridge over the river Lea, near Stratford in Essex; the first foundation of which is ascribed to Maud, or Matilda, queen of Henry the First. The following is Stowe's account of the latter, in his Annals. "Matilda, when she saw the forde to be dangerous for them that travelled by the olde forde over the river Lea (forshe herself had been well washed in the water), caused two stone bridges to be builded; of the which one was situated over Lue, at the head of the town of Stratford, now called Bow, because the bridge was arched like a bow: a rare piece of work, for before that time the like had never been seen in England." The churches of St. Mary-de-Arcubus, or Le-Bow, in London, and St. Mary Arches, or de-Arcubus, in Exeter, were so designated for similar reasons. There is a vulgar tradition that

the direct line at Yarty bridge, it continues straight forward, through Kilmington, to the Horestone*, which indicates the border of a detached part of the county of Dorset, on Shute hill, and thence to Dalwood down, where it becomes the boundary of the county of Devon for more than two miles†. At the highest point of this down, a tumulus has been thrown up, to direct the traveller into a very conspicuous line of road, leading off from the Ikeneld, northwards, along the ridge of Longbear

Bow bridge over the Axe was so called in consequence of a man named Bow having fallen dead upon it; but the former seems the more probable origin of the name; especially as in the register of Newenham Abbey, lately in the library of the Royal Society, and now in that of the British Museum, a bridge is mentioned existing here as early as the reign of Edward the Third. The old road passed a little to the right of the present one, before it reached the bridge; and a little to the left after having crossed the river.

* Derived from the Latin "ora," Anglo-Saxon "or, ord," and "ora," a boundary or limit, and the Anglo-Saxon "stan," a stone: the word therefore implies the mark or boundary stone, or stone of memorial: see Hamper on Hoar-stones, p. 6. The practice of erecting single stones as pillars of memorial may be traced back to the remotest ages: see Genesis xxviii. 18; xxxi. 45, 52; and Joshua xv. 6; xviii. 17. Such stones, under various appellations, are frequently met with in the western counties of England, and occasionally in other parts of this country; in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland: they were, perhaps, set up at widely different periods of time; but the greater number placed on the sides of roads were probably Roman.

† The existence of the Roman road in this neighbourhood, is evidenced by the transcript of an ancient deed in the writer's possession, bearing date on the 13th of February, 1274; by which the abbot and convent of Newenham remit and quitclaim to Sir William Bonville of Shute the annual payment of 24s. 8d. from his lands called *Ora* and *La Streta*.

down, to meet a branch of the Fosse-way, coming, as will hereafter appear, from Somersetshire to Hembury fort. The northern extremity of this road joins the Fosse at a place bearing the name of Corry Fortice*, and at the southern end, where it diverges from the Ikeneld, it is called Fortice gate†. Near the last mentioned spot some traces of this Roman road were, in the year 1828, distinctly to be seen, crossing a marshy place upon the down, which had been abandoned on the construction of the modern line of road, about fifty yards to the east of it. This ancient causeway appeared to have been about ten feet in width, and consisted of a pavement of flint stones, fixed upon a firm stratum of smaller stones and gravel.

From Dalwood down the Ikeneld proceeds down Moorcots hill, through the village of Wilmington, and past the hore-stones called "The Grey stone" and "Drummer's stone," to Mount Pleasant, where it leaves the turnpike road to the right hand, passing by Honiton church, to the Turk's-head inn, and thence, through Wayring-

* "Corry" is the name of a brook which rises at this place and joins the Yarty at Kilmington: "fortice" is probably a corruption of "fosse."

† The word "gate," from the Ang. Sax. "gata, gæt, gangan," to go, is often used, and especially in the north of England, for a road or way—gaed, gane, or gone—and not for a port or entrance, as commonly: see Grose's Glossary. "Fortice gate therefore may indicate "the road to the Fosse."

stone and Awlescombe, to Hembury fort and Exeter.

The successive alterations and improvements of the turnpike road on the track of the Ikeneld, in the neighbourhood of Axminster, have entirely destroyed all traces of its appearance, in its actual formation at the present day*; but within the last century some portions of it must have been visible to the traveller. Dr. Musgrave writes†, “*Trans Axium (Axminster) interque illud et Honiton viæ militaris certa sunt vestigia, cisque Honiton miliare versus aureum (Fairmile) manifestissima.*” Dr. Borlase also says, in 1754: “As I came from Honiton towards Exeter, about four miles west of Honiton I saw two plain fragments of what I take to have been the ancient Roman road to the *Isca Danmonii*: one of these was the noblest piece of road that I ever remember to have seen‡.” Accident discovered to the writer, also, in the year 1828, a fragment of what had doubtless been the Roman road, probably about the same spot where Dr. Musgrave saw it. This was by the side of the turnpike road, in an angle on the descent of Moorcots-hill from Dalwood down, nearly five

* Marks of an older road, consisting of trenches and banks of earth, are occasionally visible at the sides of the present one on the hill two miles west of Axminster, and especially on Dalwood down.

† *Belgium Britannicum*, p. 74.

‡ *Antiq. of Cornwall*, p. 322, n.

miles from Axminster. The removal of an accumulated mass of sand and earth laid open the ancient road, firm and compact, with a level surface. It was about eighteen inches deep, composed of large stones at the bottom and smaller ones above, decreasing in size to the top, and forming together an unbroken mass as close as if cemented with lime and sand. This portion of the Ikeneld was very similar in appearance to a part of the same road near Eggardun hill, mentioned in a foregoing page, and, like it, was broken up for the repair of the adjoining road. From what we thus learn of the direct lines, and the actual construction of the Roman ways, it is obvious that in the modern improvement of our turnpike roads, by shortening their extent and correcting the mode of their formation, we are only recurring to the system practised fifteen centuries ago; but with this pleasing difference, that whereas the one was accomplished by military discipline and a tyrannous coercion of the people, the other is the result of increasing wealth and a cultivation of the arts of peace, and is effected by the paid labour of an industrious population.

We now return to the vicinal way, which, diverging from the Ikeneld at Charmouth, seems to have followed the windings of the coast, for commercial purposes. It keeps the highest ground,

and throws off several branches on either side, but especially along the hills towards the north, which unite it again at many points with the Ikeneld way. Leaving Charmouth on the line of the British trackway, it reached Lyme Regis, a town which was probably known to the Romans, as the principal entrance to it bears the name of "Silver street," a term often found in the vicinity of Roman roads and stations*. From Lyme the road proceeds along the hills to Axe bridge and Colyford, where branches lead off southward to Axmouth and Seaton†, and one northward, by

* "Silver street" has been supposed to mean "via ad Silures;" but as that nation inhabited South Wales, the application of the term to a road at so great a distance is unlikely. One of the Roman roads in Spain is designated as the Salamantic, or Silver-way.—See Gough's Camden. Introd. p. xlvii.

† According to Horsley on Ptolemy's Geography of Britain, the river "Alaenus" seems to be the Axe, and "Alaeni ostia" Axmouth. (Brit. Rom. p. 264).—Much has been said on the claims of Seaton to the distinction of a Roman station; but no remains are recorded to have been found there, neither does any military way lead to it. As a place of trade, it, as well as Axmouth, was probably known to the Romans. Tradition still retains in memory the flourishing state of both these now inconsiderable places, and there can be no doubt that at a former period the harbour at the mouth of the Axe was of much greater importance than at present. This is evidenced by the remains of shipping, which have been discovered in places far above the present high-water mark. (Gough's Camden, Stukeley Iter. vi.)—Leland, who wrote in the time of Henry the Eighth, represents Axe-bridge as impassable at high tides. He describes Seaton as "but a mere thing; inhabited with fischar men," but adds, "it hath bene far larger when the haven was good." (Itin. v. iii. p. 71).—And this is proved by the fact that in the reign of Edward the Third, A.D. 1347, when Poole and Lyme furnished each four ships to the

Colyton and Streethayne, to Northleigh hill and Glanwell—at both which places Roman coins have been found—and thence to a junction with the Ikeneld at Honiton*. Passing Stanford, Harepark, Hangmanstone, and Elver or Elderway, the road again divides, at a place clearly designating its course by the name “Long Cheminey:” the main road proceeds by Sidford, Newton-Poppleford, and Bishop’s-Clist, to Exeter; while the northern branch, passing over Broadway hill and Farway hill† to Gittesham hill, once more divides,—one part leading to Hembury fort; the other, through Otery St. Mary, to an union with the Ikeneld at Streteway head, on its way to Exeter.

Royal Navy, Seaton was able to provide two vessels, with twenty-five men. (Hutchins’s Dorset. Introd. p. lvi.ii.)—Some attempts were made to form a harbour here in the reign of Henry the Sixth; for Bishop Lacy, as appears by his register in the archives at Exeter, on the twenty-first September, 1450, granted forty days’ indulgence to true penitents who should contribute to the works “in novo portu in littore maris apud Seton.” Camden mentions that anchors have been found as high up the river as Axminster: but that fact does not prove, as Dr. Stukeley seems to infer, that the sea once flowed to so great a distance up the valley; for it is ascertained that in earlier ages the forges were in the forests, and that iron ore was brought by the manufacturers to the woods, which they had bought for the purpose of working it up as well into anchors as other utensils. (Encyc. Antiq. p. 277.)

* Of the Roman coins found at “the stone beacon” on Northleigh-hill, three are in the writer’s possession. They are of copper, but much defaced. One appears to be of Hadrian, and another of Lucius Verus.

† From the Ang.-Sax. “far-an,” to go, and “wæg,” a way.

The other great Roman road, which has been adverted to as crossing the town and parish of Axminster almost at right angles with the Ikeneld street, is a branch of the *Via fossata*, Fosse way, or Fosse dyke; so called either from its being defended by a fosse on both sides, or because it was left in some parts in an unfinished state, in the form of a large ditch*; which, having traversed the whole length of the island, reaches Bath, and crosses the county of Somerset on its way to Exeter. The ancient itineraries will afford no assistance in tracing this road farther south than Wells; for it is not mentioned by Antonine, and the latter part of the iter of Richard, which described its course, is unhappily lost. The fragment which remains is as follows, omitting the stations northward of Bath:

“ Iter x.†

“ From Inverness, through the length of the island, to
Isca Dunmoniorum (Exeter).

Aquæ Solis(*Bath*)
xviii.

Ad Aquas(*Wells*)
* * * *

Ad Uxellum Amnem
* * * *

* * * *

Isca Dunmoniorum(*Exeter*).”

* Gough's *Camden*. Introd. p. xlvii.; Polwhele's *Devon*, vol. i. p. 182.

† Stukeley's *Richard of Cirencester*, p. 52.

The Fosse, as already stated, was one of the four roads entitled by the Anglo-Saxon laws to the privileges of the *Pax Regis*: it is mentioned by one of our English chronicles as the principal of them, and is said to have commenced at Totnes and terminated in Caithness*.

The course of this celebrated Roman road may be distinctly traced, in a direct and very conspicuous line, from Bath, to Wells, Ilchester, and Petherton bridge, over the river Parret, where its actual remains were discovered by Dr. Stukeley, and near to which Roman coins to a very large number have been found†. The site of the Roman station here, is pointed out by lands in the parish of Stoke bearing the name of Stan-chester, and by a tradition that "the old village" once stood there. Near the ancient ford, now Petherton bridge, are lands called "Deadway ‡." From this place, the track of the Fosse being comparatively obscure, its further direction west-

* "Quarum viarum prima et maxima dicitur Fossa ab Austro in Boream extensa, quæ incipit ab angulo Cornubiæ, in Totenes, et terminatur in fine Scotiæ apud Catenes." E. 45°. cap°. Iⁱ Libri Historiæ Ranulphi Hygedeni, in Leland's Collectanea, vol. iii. p. 370. Leland's note follows: "Verius tamen secundum aliquos incipit in Cornubia, tendensque per Devoniam et Somersete, juxta Twekesbyri, supra Coteswolde juxta Coventre, usque Leyrcestre procedit," &c.

† Itin. Cur. vol. i. p. 156.

‡ This term seems to be derived from the Gaelic "ead," water, and the Ang.-Sax. "wæg," a road or way.

ward has been variously conjectured. Not to mention the suppositions of different writers on the subject, but after due consideration of their conflicting statements, with a careful examination of the maps, in addition to actual investigation, there remains little doubt that the true course of this ancient road may be discovered in a direction which has not been hitherto distinctly pointed out. But before this is done it will be necessary to notice a particular fact, in relation both to the Ikeneld street and the Fosse-way, which the delineation of these roads upon the maps will teach us to expect ; and it is this, that to a certain point the tracks of both these ways will be found remarkably conspicuous ; after which they become irregular and obscure, bearing the peculiar marks of their British origin, rather than those of Roman military roads, and becoming sometimes rather conjectural from the etymology of the names of places through which they pass, than evident from their actual appearance. The Ikeneld may be clearly traced, in this part of the country, along nearly the whole of its course, in direct lines, till it arrives at Eggardun ; and the Fosse, as we have stated, is equally conspicuous as far as Petherton bridge. This cessation, in each instance, of their characteristic Roman features, may be thus accounted for : During the British

period these roads had both been constructed from remote parts of the country to Isca Dammoniorum, or Exeter; they had been used by the Romans as their military ways while their dominion lasted, and during that time had without doubt been materially improved on such parts of the line as were found to need immediate alteration*. We learn from Tacitus, that while Agricola had the command in Britain, under the emperor Vespasian, the Britons, who furnished the army with corn, were obliged to make tedious journeys, through difficult cross-country roads, in order to supply camps and stations at remote distances, and almost inaccessible places†; and it was not until the latter years of the Roman power, when the troops were no longer engaged in their harassing contests with the natives, that their roads were constructed in the magnificent form in which their remains appear to the present time. In the days of Arcadius and Honorius it was that certain causeways were made in Britain

* Trajan repaired the roads, raising those that were moist and clayey with stones and high banks; clearing those that were rough and overrun with briers, and throwing bridges over impassable rivers; cutting shorter ways where they were of unnecessary length; where they went up steep hills carrying them over easier ground; and where they were beset with wild beasts, or deserted, removing them to more frequented parts; at the same time levelling all inequalities.—Gough's *Camd. Introd.* p. xlvii.

† *Vit. Agric.* c. 19.

from sea to sea*. At this period the Roman power had begun to decline, their discipline became relaxed, and their armies were gradually removed from Britain; and as we are told that the Fosse-way derived its name from its being left in an unfinished state, it seems not unreasonable to conclude that both these great public works had been completed only as far as to those places which have been pointed out, when the withdrawment of the troops, which had been employed in constructing them, rendered their further progress both impracticable and unnecessary†.

Returning to the track of our road at Petherton bridge, we shall be led to determine that the Fosse-way, after crossing the stream, proceeded in a continuation of its direct line to Watergore, where, according to the practice of the British trackways, it divided into two branches: of these, the principal appears to have struck off by Frogmary green, Green-lane-end, Hurcot, and Atherston, to Silvench mill‡, where it crossed the stream, and proceeded for some distance along the present turnpike road,

* Gough's *Camd.* ut supra.

† If this supposition be admitted, it may serve to account for the difference of the actual distance between some of the stations from that laid down in Antonine's itinerary.

‡ This name sounds as if it were derived from the Roman language. Near Axminster we have a coppice called *Sylvanus* wood.

called the "Old Way*," and in a direct line through the hamlets of Broadway and Broadway street †, over a hill bearing the same characteristic title, by Rush moor and Street ash, to Keat's mill. From this line, a road leads over Broadway common directly to castle Neroche ‡, and joins our trackway again by a trajectus through Buckland St. Mary §. At Keat's mill, which is precisely on the borders of the counties of Somerset and Devon, the road again divides. One branch proceeds over Brown down (perhaps Bourn down), forming the division of the counties for more than

* This appellation, which has been given to the road from time immemorial, seems to point out the course of the Fosse, as Old Street in London does that of the Watling-street.

† Broadway is thus described by Collinson: "This village takes its name from its situation, being originally a few huts built on each side of a broad path cut through the woods, which were at that time a forest, called the forest of Roche or Neroche," Hist. of Somerset, vol. i. p. 16. It has retained its name from the period of the Conquest, for it is thus entered in Domesday book: "Malger ten. de Co. Bradewei. Alnod tenuit T. R. E." &c. Fo. 92. a.

‡ This noble intrenchment, though of British construction, was in all probability occupied by the Romans, and was perhaps the "Alauna sylva" of Ravennas, which is mentioned next in course to Isca Danmoniorum and Moridunum.

§ Referring to this place, Collinson observes, "that this neighbourhood anciently experienced the rude foot of war is strongly indicated by the various military relics that have been discovered, and the strong intrenchments of Neroche castle still frowning over a vast extent of country." Hist. Som. vol. i. p. 20.—It is to be lamented that no account of these discoveries has been preserved.

two miles, and through Churchingford*, over South down, along the ridge of Black down, to Hembury fort, where it meets the Ikeneld street and proceeds in a direct and conspicuous line to Exeter. The other branch passes from Keat's mill in a straight course to Little down; at which spot commenced the celebrated piece of road known by the name of "Morwood's causeway," which extended about a quarter of a mile, to Birch hill. From this point the road proceeds to a place already mentioned by the name of Corry Fortice, where the valley is most readily crossed; and, having gained the ridge, leads along Upotery hill, passing Stonebarrow†, and by a wide road, called Finney or Vinney lane‡, to Honiton and Hembury fort.

The remarkable specimen of Roman workmanship just mentioned, which is known by the name of Morwood's causeway, must not be passed

* The road bends out of its course to reach this place, which is also crossed by the ancient way from Taunton to Honiton. A strict investigation might probably discover the traces of a station here; it is in the parish of Church-stanton; and, although now an inconsiderable village, is traditionally said to have been once a place of great extent. The writer inquiring his way to the village was answered, "This is the way to the city."

† See note, p. 24.

‡ Finney, or Vinney, is a term used in the west of England in the sense of decayed, rotten, spoiled.

without particular notice, as well on account of its peculiar construction, as the importance which has been attached to its title. The spot of ground across which it was carried is a part of what is called Crow moor, and was no doubt then, as it is to the present day, a flat and boggy place, very difficult to be kept dry, and consequently impassable at that time without such a pavement. The causeway, which now no longer exists, was about a quarter of a mile in length, running almost north and south, in width about fifteen feet, and composed of very large flint stones, with which the neighbourhood abounds, laid together in a most compact and durable form, having, of course, their flat sides uppermost, and resting upon a deep stratum of smaller stones and gravel. The work presented an appearance somewhat similar to that of the pavement in the London streets, except that the materials were of much larger size, and that at every interval of about six feet there was a cavity or channel across it, which caused the intermediate portions to assume the shape of low arches, and formed a furrow, or gutter, to facilitate the draining of water from the surface. That this fragment was of Roman construction there is little reason to doubt; for it remarkably coincides with the plan adopted by that people when they were

obliged to carry their roads across marshy places, as given by Statius*.

“Hic primus labor inchoare sulcos
Et rescindere limites, et alto
Egestu penitus cavare terras:
Mox haustas aliter replere fossas
Et summo gremiam parare dorso
Ne mutant sola, ne maligna sedes
Et pressis dubium cubile saxis.”

That is, they first laid out the bounds ; then dug trenches, removing the false earth ; then filled them with sound earth, and paved them with stone, that they might not sink or otherwise fail.

The title given to this causeway is supposed to have indicated its direction to Moridunum; and as it formed part of a road which led from Taunton to Seaton, it has been used to establish the claims of the latter place to that distinction ; but the fact is, that this road subsequently branched off both towards Seaton and to Hembury fort, and its principal line was undoubtedly to the latter place. This interesting relic of Roman art would probably have remained in its ancient perfection for ages to come, had not the formation of a turnpike road at its southern end been considered to demand the use of the large quantity of stones thus already collected together. It was accordingly taken up,

* Lib. iv. in via Domitian, quoted in Plot's Oxfordshire, p. 322

though with much more difficulty than had been anticipated, and its materials broken to pieces. The name and the outline of its course are all that now remain to point out where it existed*.

We now proceed to trace that branch of the Fosse-way which, striking off at Watergore, advances in a south-westerly direction to a junction with the Ikeneld at Axminster, and thence to the sea coast. From Watergore it advances in a straight course to Dinnington, passes the higher lodge of Hinton park, and leads on to Chillington down, and by Windwhistle to White down, where the ridge commands an extensive prospect, taking in the whole country between the English and the Bristol Channels, which are both, in clear weather, distinctly visible. From White down it leads over Chard common, through the hamlets of Street and Perry street, in the tything and manor of the

* It is about a mile to the north of Morwood's causeway, near a public-house called "The Traveller's Rest," that the tumuli called Robin Hood's Butts diversify the cheerless appearance of the down. They are conical mounds of earth, of about sixty feet diameter, and "are supposed to be the tombs of warriors who fell during the contests between the Saxons and the Danes." (Collinson's Somerset, vol. i. p. 20). One of them was opened in the year 1818, by some persons from Chard, in hopes of discovering hidden treasure; and in the centre of the barrow was found a conical heap of flints, of about three feet diameter; but they did not penetrate, it seems, below the surface of the soil, and no deposit was found. These tumuli bear the characteristic marks of Celtic barrows.

same name*, to Titherleigh; where, on the descent of the hill, it crosses a piece of ground called Walway, or Oldway, and soon after passes the boundary of the county of Somerset, entering the county of Devon, just before it crosses the river Axe at a place formerly called Stratford, or Streteford. Thence it proceeds in a direct line to Milbrook, where it turns to the right, up the hill, into the town of Axminster, and, crossing the Ikeneld way, leads on southward, almost with a straight course, by a place called in old writings "Cowld Harborowe †," to the village of Musbury. From this village a branch leads directly up the acclivity to the western gate of the hill fortress, while the Fosse proceeds to a junction with the lower branch of the Ikeneld near Axebridge ‡.

Having thus followed the tracks of the two principal Roman roads which intersect the parish

* "This manor derived its name from the Roman stratum, or street, called the Fosse road, which runs through it on its way to Devon. In the year 1684, an urn containing many Roman coins was found betwixt this village and Winsham." (Collinson's Somerset, vol. i. p. 478.) We have also among the lands in this tything, belonging at the dissolution to Ford Abbey, Street grange, and Street mead. (Oliver's Monasteries of Devon, App. p. xlv).

† See note, p. 54.

‡ See Musgrave's Belg. Brit. p. 74; Stukeley's Itin. vol. vi. p. 160; Gough's Camd. p. 32; Hutchins's Dorset, Introd. p. xv.; Polwhele's Devon, vol. i. p. 182; Lysons, vol. vi. p. cccxiv.; Anc. Wilts, vol. ii. p. 23.

of Axminster, a short notice may be permitted of some others, which must be classed with them. The first of these is a lane, which, proceeding from the Ikeneld street at the foot of Barrowshot hill, leads to a junction with the Fosse on its way to Musbury, reaching it by a shorter line than that through the town. This, in the upper portion of it, is called Woodbury lane; and in its lower part Fairy (a corruption of Farway) lane; both which names seem to designate its claims to antiquity*. The next is a short *trajectus*, which, in a deed bearing the date of 1252, is designated by the term “Le Stauneway,” and yet has the name of Stony lane, indicating its Roman construction†. This, as in the instance just mentioned, connects the Ikeneld with the Fosse-way, but on the opposite or eastern side of the town.

A third road to be mentioned, was without doubt a vicinal way of the Romans, although, as before observed, originally of British formation. It leaves the castle of Neroche on Black down, and passes over Buckland hill to Whitestanton and Baalay down, where it divides,—one branch leading to Membury fort and Axminster, while the other, passing over Smalridge hill, joins the Fosseat Streteford. On Baalay down, and on the summit of Smalridge hill, this road may be traced by a firm

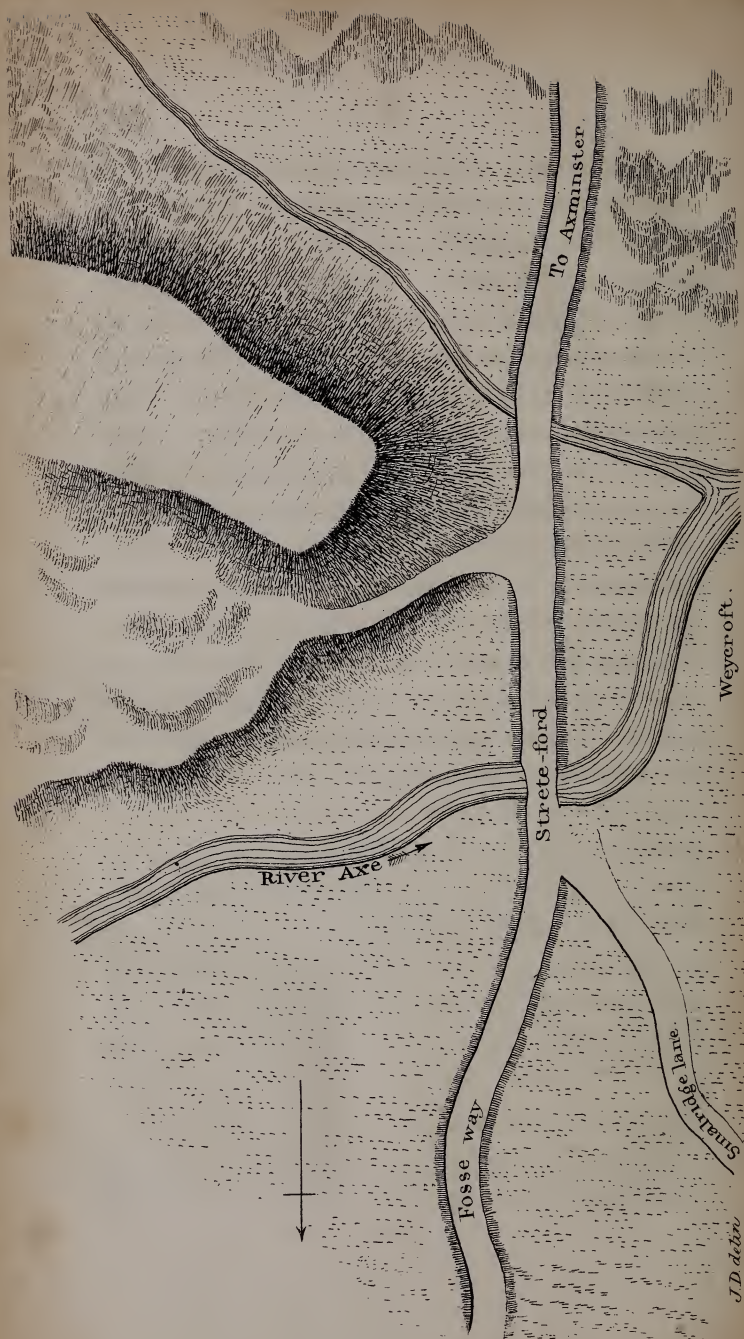
* Encyc. Antiq. p. 520.

† Id.

trackway leading along the turf*. At the junction of this vicinal way with the Fosse at Streteford, where it crosses the river Axe, we find a projecting knoll, or point of the hill, of considerable extent and elevation, which, judging from its commanding situation as respects the road, its name, its striking appearance, and its form, there is good reason to conclude was one of the *præsidia*, or outposts, which the Romans usually constructed in the vicinity of their larger stations. These *castella* were placed on the line of their military ways, frequently at the junction of the roads, and especially at the crossings of rivers, to afford assistance to the troops and convoys, to secure the necessary supplies of provisions, and sometimes, in the lower grounds, to protect their cattle in the neighbouring pastures†. A

* In the year 1810 part of a Roman tessellated pavement was discovered at Wadeford, in the parish of Combe St. Nicholas, a little more than a mile east of this road. The design consisted of scrolls and borders without any figures, and, if perfect, would have formed a square of about ten feet. Not any drawing is known to have been made of this interesting relic, which, being left open, was quickly destroyed by the hands of the ignorant and the effects of the weather. Judging from its situation, in a field adjoining a beautiful stream, it was the ornament of a Roman bath, and, from the irregularity of the surface, it is very probable that other remains might be found on the spot.

† *Encyc. Antiq.* p. 510. For an account of this class of forts, with a description of several of them, one of which remarkably coincides with that under notice, see Whitaker's *Manchester*, vol. i. p. 231. See also Gale's *Essay on Anto-*



Weyer-oft.

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more necessary or a more eligible spot could scarcely have been fixed upon for the situation of one of these forts than that which this elevation presented. Its name, "Weycroft," indicates its immediate vicinity to the Roman way, which it commands very boldly, and from which a road leads up to its area under the steepest part of the hill: without this it was accessible only on the eastern side; and it is so formed by nature and art, being partially surrounded by a deep ravine and supplied with water by a well on its summit, that it must have been a place of considerable security for its garrison. The ford of the Axe at this place was probably in the time of floods both difficult and dangerous; for at the present day, in spite of the limits which the turnpike road has endeavoured to assign for it, the river on certain occasions overflows its bounds to a considerable extent on the northern side. Here, then, is placed a fort, at the junction of the roads, which could afford assistance in case of need. It had also the advantage of being situated within view of the camp at Membury, which, as we shall presently find, was occupied by the Romans, and

nine's Itinerary, p. 99, where, assigning the Roman station "Tripontium" to the modern "Dowbridge," he says, "*Quo nos recti ducit agger publicus, et ubi mansionem fuisse Romanorum persuadent situs ad viam militarem, antiqua valla, et monticulus in conum aggestus.*"

with which it was immediately connected by a road from Smalridge hill to the eastern gate of that fortress. Not any decided vestiges of the Roman art remain at this place; nor is it to be expected that any should be found, as it nearly adjoins the site of a manor-house and other erections of various dates, which have been occupied for a long period of time; but, in corroboration of the claims to the designation which we have given to this spot, it will be found connected on the eastern side with a road which must be considered as Roman, but which, in common with some others of equal interest, can only be hastily adverted to. This road seems to have been a vicinal way, branching from the Fosse at or near White down, and passing Ford abbey, Highridge, Parkway or Portway, and a coppice called Sylvanus' wood, reaches Holditch or Olditch, and by Canseywood and Chackridge, gains the elevation of the hill, and proceeds directly to Lambart's castle*. The numerous Roman roads which are thus found to intersect this part of the country in almost every direction,

* The term "Portway" is indicative of a Roman road. (Salmon's Survey, p. 35).—Olditch is clearly expressive of an ancient fosse. (Risdon's Survey, p. 16).—Cansey is another name for causeway. (Grose's Glossary).—And Lambart's castle, if not formed by the Romans, was occupied by them. (Hutchins's Dorset. Introd. p. xii.)

are proofs, if any others were wanting, of the long and peaceful possession of the district by that people; and the absence of encampments constructed according to their known rules of castrametation, affords a strong presumptive evidence that, instead of forming their *stativa castra* in situations less advantageous, they adopted the British fortresses, which already occupied the most commanding eminences of the country. The following observation of a modern writer in reference to these forts may be added:—"There is no reason to suppose that this country was so much the scene of military transactions during the Roman period as to induce a belief that many of the camps and fortresses, of which vestiges now remain, are to be assigned to that people*."

The forts of Musbury and Membury have been described in the foregoing chapter, and reasons have been given for the conclusion that they were originally of British formation; but there will be also good cause to determine that they were adopted by the Romans, when it is considered that they are situated in a part of the country where the Roman occupation is proved, not only by numerous roads, but by coins and other re-

* Lysons, vol. vi. p. cccxlix.

mains discovered in great quantities and in many places ; and that, in a district unoccupied by their regular camps, it can scarcely be doubted that they should have taken possession of two fortresses so nearly adjoining to their principal military ways, and so evidently connected with them. There is no doubt that British forts were in many instances subjected by the Romans to such alterations and additions as should make them correspond in some degree to their own peculiar plans* ; and the irregularity of surface presented by the area of Musbury castle, notwithstanding the levelling effects of the plough, will suggest the existence of the *prætoria*, or of the observatory tumuli, which are among the distinguishing features of Roman camps†.

That Membury fort was in the occupation of the Romans there can be little doubt ; but the comparative want of strength, apparent on viewing both its situation as respects the adjoining ground

* Encyc. Antiq. p. 500.

† Several writers have been of opinion that the intrenchments of Musbury and Membury were of Roman formation. Mr. Lewis, of Honiton, in a memoir addressed to the Society of Antiquaries in 1780, ranks Musbury among a number of camps which he supposes to be Roman. (Gough's *Camd.* p. 32).—Mr. Polwhele remarks, that “the intrenchment of Musbury is one of the most remarkable of those Roman works that were thrown up to defend the east of Devon against the Saxons.” (*Hist. of Devon*, vol. i. p. 187.)

and the rampart which surrounds it, seems to intimate that it was one of their *castra æstiva*, or summer encampments, which were seldom placed directly on the military ways*, rather than a fortress for the permanent abode of a garrison. The discovery of Roman remains in its immediate neighbourhood is among the proofs of the occupation of this intrenchment by that people. In the year 1814 a large quantity of coins were discovered in a heap of stones at a place called Hill common, in the parish of Membury. They had been deposited in a wide unglazed earthen vessel, in shape similar to our garden flower-pots. Most of these coins have been lost; but such as remain in various hands in the neighbourhood are of copper, some of them washed with silver. They are of the emperors Aurelian, Tacitus, Probus, and Diocletian, with some of Tetricus, Philippus, and the empress Cornelia Salonina. Some further remains of an interesting description came to light in the year 1823: they were discovered on an eminence called Beacon hill, very near the road leading over Smalridge hill to Membury fort, and about a mile from the latter. On this spot, a labourer, taking away an irregular

* Horsley, *Brit. Rom.* p. 392.

heap of stones of about twenty feet diameter, found, in the centre of the tumulus, a conical heap of rounded pebbles from the sea beach; on removing which, a stroke of his pickaxe broke an urn which contained a number of Roman coins, with a quantity of black ashes, having among them some minute pieces of charcoal and burnt bones. In addition to the coins within the urn were several others dispersed around it, amounting in the whole to about thirty, of various sizes, in brass and copper. Some few of them, which have been traced, appear to be of the lower empire, but the whole were much defaced. Of two in the writer's possession, a large brass one is of Faustina, wife of the emperor Antoninus Pius, and the other apparently of Aurelius. The urn was about seven inches in height, composed of a reddish earth, of coarse manufacture, unglazed, and without ornament; it was placed upon the surface of the soil, and then covered with a tumulus. Among the means adopted by the Romans for the defence of their camps and stations, stones were used, the larger being thrown from engines and the smaller from slings*; and we learn from Vegetius, that they were in the

* Cæsar. Bell. Gal. l. ii. s. 11, 19, 24; iv. 23; v. 35, &c.

practice of collecting round stones in their fortified places, to be ready for use in case of an attack*. Those, therefore, which denoted this Roman burial-place, had been brought from the sea-side for that purpose; in like manner with the stones found by Dr. Stukely in the camp at Camalet, which were of a kind not known in the neighbourhood†. Here then, in all probability, were deposited the ashes of a Roman soldier in attendance upon the beacon on this spot, or in garrison at the neighbouring camp at Membury‡. The money found in the urn was the “*naulum*,” or fare for Charon on the passage of the soul over the waters of Styx; and the pieces scattered around were, perhaps, charitable offerings, placed with the ashes by comrades of the deceased, to facilitate the transit of the soul to the regions of felicity. Such was the groveling superstition which unassisted reason imposed on the minds of the world’s conquerors.

At a short distance from this spot, on the same hill, was also found a hole in the natural soil, of

* “*Saxa rotunda de fluviiis, quia pro soliditate graviora sunt et aptiora mittentibus, diligentissimè colliguntur, ex quibus muri replentur.*” Lib. iv. c. 8.

† Itin. cur. p. 142.

‡ That the Roman soldiers buried money with the ashes of the dead, see Salmon’s Survey, p. 28.

about four feet in depth and two in diameter, walled round in a circular form with flint stones, in the manner of a well. At the bottom of it was a quantity of ashes and black earth ; upon which lay a cylindrical stone of about a foot in thickness and in diameter, with a cavity in the middle of it. This excavation was without doubt an oven, and was used either by the soldiers stationed on this hill, or by the Romanized Britons, who must have had a settlement in the immediate neighbourhood. The stone found within it was evidently the lower half of a quern, or hand mill, which had been appropriated to the purpose of supporting the food during the process of baking*. Stone querns of

* The quern, or hand corn-mill of the ancients, was made of two small portable stones ; the lower one a cylinder, with a cavity on the top, into which the upper fitted ; and the corn was ground between them, the meal falling out upon a cloth. Such were the millstones forbidden in Deut. xxiv. 6 to be taken in pledge, and the millstone referred to by our Lord in the Gospels. Grinding the grain by means of such hand mills appears, as well from sacred as classical history, to have been the peculiar business of prisoners and slaves. Samson was so employed in the prison-house (Judges xvi. 21) ; and from Simo's threat to Davus, in the second scene of the *Adrian* of Terence, it seems to have been the business of Roman slaves. Wiclif translates Matthew xxiv. 21, "Two wynmen schulen be gryndynge in on querne ;" which shews that in his time such mills were the most common ; and Harrison says, in the addition to Holinshed's *Chronicle*, that the "wife ground her malt at home uppon her querne." In Roman camps a quern formed part of the furniture of each tent.

different forms have also been found upon the hills in the adjoining parishes of Uplyme and Combe Pyne.

But these are not all the vestiges by which the Roman occupation of this neighbourhood is rendered certain. In a lane leading from the village of Wambrook to Baalay down, in direct communication with the camp at Membury, and about two miles distant from it, there was discovered, some years ago, a very large quantity of Roman coins, to an amount so considerable that the place from that time has borne the name of "Money-pit-lane *." A Roman coin of one of the early emperors was also found a few years since, in a cottager's garden at Heathstock, in the parish adjoining to Membury.

That the Romans frequently fixed their stations upon ground which had been previously occupied by the Britons, is a circumstance established, as well by the researches of antiquaries †, as by the fact that nearly three-fourths of the stations laid down in the itineraries derive their appellations

* Various conjectures have been offered for the concealment of coins by the Romans; but it is most probable that money was buried by soldiers before going into action, that it might not fall into the hands of the enemy. *Encyc. Antiq.* p. 882.

† Whitaker's *Manchester*, b. i. chap. 1; Hutchins's *Dorset*, vol. i. pp. 15, 371, &c.

from the British language, and are thereby proved to have been erected on British sites. These stations having, for the most part, grown into towns' of consequence by the commerce and the arts of a civilized people, and being in general strongly fortified, were in like manner taken possession of by the Saxons, when they had subdued the Romanized Britons who had succeeded to the occupation of them*.

In the foregoing Part it has been attempted to shew that the town of Axminster was in its origin a settlement of the Britons; and there is abundant proof that it was a well-known place at an early period of the Saxon annals: we have therefore strong presumptive evidence, if other were wanting, that in the intervening period this town was known to the Romans. That it is the site of one of their stations, may be also inferred from the fact that the two great roads are found to bend out of their direct line to reach it; which they are never known to do unless for the purpose of approaching or leaving a settlement, or when some natural obstacle presented itself to their progress†. At this place also occurs the intersec-

* Salmon's Survey, p. 28; Horsley's Brit. Rom. p. 392; Whitaker's Manc. ut supra.

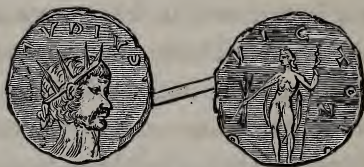
† Nichols's Leicestersh. Introd.; Anc. Wilts, vol. ii. p. 29; Encyc. Antiq. p. 517.

tion of the roads, which was a point usually chosen by the Romans for the site of a station*.

Nor is the evidence derived from the discovery of remains on the spot entirely wanting. Coins have been dug up in the gardens on the western declivity of the town, to the number, as is said, of at least two hundred, within the last fifty years. The greater part of these are provincial tokens, and English money of various dates, lost in the attack and defence of the town during the civil wars; but some of them are represented to have been of brass, and to have worn the aspect of great antiquity. These are believed to have been Roman; but they were sold, part to a Jew, and part to a gentleman then resident in the neighbourhood, and it has not been found possible to trace any of them to the hands of their present owners. When Cosmo the Third, grand duke of Tuscany, staid a night at Axminster, in the year 1669, he passed the evening in the examination of some ancient coins which had been dug up in the neighbourhood. They were shewn to him by the vicar, the Reverend J. J. Crabbe; and it is to be regretted that they are not more particularly described, as they must have been more than

* Anc. Wilts, vol. ii. p. 15; Encyc. Antiq. pp. 519, 520.

commonly interesting to have occupied the attention of the duke, who was a man of learning and taste, and who records the circumstance in his journal*. One other testimony to the truth of our position has recently and opportunely come to light. This is a brass coin, in the writer's possession, which was found in 1830, at the depth of two feet from the surface, in the church-yard at Axminster. It is of the emperor Claudius, and in tolerable preservation, as the accompanying outline will shew.



The figure of Victory on the reverse, with a thunderbolt in her right hand and a standard in her left, has reference, probably, to that emperor's triumphs over the Goths, between the years 268 and 270 of the Christian æra.

That the town of Axminster is the site of one of the *hyberna castra*, or more important settlements of the Romans, will not be maintained, as these usually present considerable remains to no-

* Travels, p. 138.

tice, are in general of greater extent, and have in most instances risen into towns of consequence at the present day; but it was, in all probability, one of the smaller stations, fixed at convenient places on the roads for the temporary accommodation of troops and passengers, and which were called “*mutationes*,” in consequence of horses being kept there for the use of the couriers*. For such a purpose its position seems peculiarly adapted, and the numerous discoveries of Roman remains in the neighbourhood prove the constant intercourse which must have been maintained on the several roads which centre at this point; while its intermediate situation between the forts of Musbury and Membury, and its direct communication with them and with the castellum of Weycroft, independent of its own means of defence, would render it a position of considerable security.

The events which history has recorded during the period of time to which this chapter refers, were little else than those of aggression and warfare; and even of them, as particularly connected with Britain, we have but little account; for those parts of the historians from whom some

* Gough's *Camd. Introd.* p. xlvii.; *Encyc. Antiq.* p. 519.

information might have been expected—namely, Tacitus, Dio Cassius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and others—are unhappily lost.

Axminster, under its Latin name Axa or Asca, continued, without doubt, in the occupation of the Romanized Britons until the Saxon æra, when its acknowledged existence as a town and a fortress brings it under the notice of our own authentic annals.

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